

CHRISTS  
COMMUNION  
with his  
CHURCH MILITANT:

First preached, and now publish-  
ed for the good of Gods  
Church in generall.

---

*The fourth Edition.*

---

By  
NICHOLAS LOCKYER,  
Master of Arts.

---

Cant. 1. 13. *A bundle of Myrrhe is  
my Wel-beloved unto me, he shall  
lie all night betwixt my breasts.*

---

CAMBRIDGE,  
Printed by Roger Daniel, for  
John Rothwell at the Sunne  
in Pauls Church-yard.

1645.





TO

The virtuous Lady Aunt,  
SUSAN CECILL,

Grace and peace be multiplied

BY

JESUS CHRIST.

MADAM:



*He sweet taste I have  
had of your Lady-ships  
love to the best things,  
bath encouraged me*

*bumbly to present this little Tract unto  
you. What Salomon speaks from ex-  
perience, that you upon triall have*

*A 2 found*

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

found true, That the most promising contents of this life, are vanitie and vexation of Spirit. Our wise and mercifull Father doth usually thus imbitter the sweetest things of this world to us, that we may the more cordially relish, and fervently seek after that full satisfying, and everlasting sweetnesse and comfort, which is in Communion with Christ our heavenly Husband, in whom all fulnesse of consolation dwells. A drop of this transcendent fulnesse, your Ladyship (I hope) shall find distilled into your soul, by reading this little work now come to your hands, which like Aqua Vitæ, shall cheare and revive your sad spirit, when ready to faint. Fainting persons, carrie  
little

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

little bottles of reviving liquids, always about them; if your Ladyship shall think fit, to make this little tract your pocket-Companion, and peruse a little of it still, when you feel soul-quaknes to seize upon you; you shall find (I trust) through the blessing of Christ, much ease and comfort; and so spend and end your aged dayes, in more true solace of heart, then yet you have done your primeſt dayes of flourishing youth. The accomplishing of this, is the sincere and holy aim of your much obliged Nephew, in this his first offering to publike view. Which simple aim, that the Lord may graciously answer to your Ladyships comfort here, and eternall happinesse

## The Epistle Dedictory.

hereafter, I shall still continue my prayer (though here I end my Epistle) that the Lord will still attend this my poore endeavour with his rich blessing, to all the partakers thereof, and in speciall to you.

Your much obliged Nephew,

NICHOLAS LOCKYER.



¶ *Chri-*



## ¶ *Christian Reader.*

**C**ommunion with Christ, is our happineſſe in this world, and in the world to come: that which makes every ſweet thing ſweet, and every ſweet thing ſweeter. With this ſweet ſubject is this little Tract now come to thy hand taken up. Poore ſallen man is ſtill complaining of one want or other; and when the thing is given which he longed for, yet his ſoul is as farre from content, as before; like to a child that cryes for this and that, and yet when he hath what he cryed for, continues crying ſtill, & cannot tell well what he would have. All our want is this, the want of Communion with Chriſt: this is the cauſe of all complaints; the infelici-

*To the Reader.*

---

tie of the soul, the sum of mans misery, here and hereafter, but poor blind man sees it not, and therefore complains of twenty things, twenty miles on this side his disease; and so spends his dayes in labour and sorrow, and yet loses happinesse, both here and hereafter too. A full fruition of Christ, is full felicity: a full fruition of any thing below Christ, without Christ, is but vanity and vexation of spirit. The more then, O fallen man, thou canst get into communion with **thy God, the more will thy great losse** be repaired, thy complaining soul satisfied, and thy tranquillity settled upon thee again. Hunt not then after riches, honours, pleasures, and such like low delights of the sonnes of men, with this deluded mistaken world, which lies in wickednesse; for felicity is not in these: but study and strive after a nearer communion with Christ: the next way to get most  
in

*To the Reader.*

---

in with him, is the speedy way unto all happineſſe: ſo much as thou canſt get of his company, ſo much art thou in heaven. *How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the ſumme of them? If I ſhould count them, they are more in number then the ſand: when I awake I am ſtill with thee,* Pſal. 134. 17, 18.

This is heaven upon earth, and that true Nobilitie and Honour which we ſhould be all ambitious after; to loſe our ſpirits in God. What an unſpeakable felicity is it, to be ſtill with God in our thoughts. This ennobles the ſpirit of man, and makes it a companion to the King of Kings: this gives evenneſſe and ſteadineſſe to a mans courſe; and makes him walk in all the wayes of God blameleſſe: this gives tranſcendent peace and tranquillitie to a mans ſpirit, and makes him unmoveable in the miſt of fears: this gives bread  
in

*To the Reader.*

in famine ; drink, in drought ; peace in warre ; health in sicknesse ; life in death. Devote thy self therefore to Christ, that he may devote himself to thee : and as a poore *medium* of communion, make use (if thou please) of this ensuing Treatise. If thou get any good, give glory to God ; and make the poore Pen-man, a constant sharer in thy prayers.

*Thine in Christ,*

Theophilus Philanthropus.



## ¶ The principall heads handed in this Tract.

**T**hat the Church Militant of Christ  
shall not be left comfortlesse, because  
Christ will come to comfort her, Page 5  
That Christ doth come to his Church  
Militant,

P. 7

That Christ doth come to his Church  
Militant, to comfort her in all condit-  
ons,

P. 12

When Christ comes to his disconsolate  
Church, as a Comforter,

P. 27, &c.

Why Christ will come to his Church  
upon earth, as a Comforter,

P. 31, &c.

Wicked men shall live and die comfort-  
lesse, because Christ as a comforter will  
never come to them,

P. 35, &c.

Laughter is one thing, and spirituall

con-

## The Contents.

*consolation another,*

P.37

*How Christ doth come to the wicked in  
this life,*

P.39

*Christ will come to the wicked, neither  
in prosperity nor in adversity, as a com-  
forter,*

P.40, &c.

*How wicked men may get Christ as a  
comforter to come to them,*

P.43, &c.

*Usefull instructions to strong men, and  
to babes in Christ,*

P.45

*Strong men in Christ, that say Christ  
as a comforter is come to them, should  
make it sure to themselves, that they are not  
deceived,*

P.46

*The great need of this,*

P.46.

*How a man may know that it is Christ  
indeed, and no spirit of delusion, which is  
come to him with consolation;*

P.48

*Strong men in Christ, after they have  
made it sure to themselves, that the true  
comforter is come to them, should so walk  
that they may ever enjoy his sweet com-  
pany,*

P.53

*How Christians may so walk as to enjoy  
Christ*

## The Contents.

Christ as a comforter continually, P.54  
Babes in Christ who never found Christ  
as a comforter to come to them should be-  
lieve that he will come to them, P.61

Their objections against Christs coming  
to them as a comforter, answered, P.62  
Babes in Christ that never found Christ  
as a comforter come to them, should pati-  
ently wait till Christ thus come to them,

P.64  
Several considerations very powerfull  
to make the soul to wait patiently till Christ  
as a comforter come to him, P.65

Babes in Christ, which never yet found  
Christ as a comforter to come to them, should  
observe how Christ comes with comfort to  
the soul, and not put him off, P.72

Babes in Christ, which have found  
Christ as a comforter to come to them, but  
now have lost him, should labour to be sen-  
sible of their losse, P.74, &c.

Such should not blame Christ for d part-  
ing as a comforter from them, P.77, &c.  
Means how such babes in Christ, may

## The Contents.

---

get their comforter to return again to them,  
P. 79, &c.

2. Tim. 4. vers. 22.

The Lord Jesus Christ be with  
thy spirit.

To have the Lord Jesus Christ with  
our spirits, is a prime and principall blessing,  
P. 85

There is a double presence of Christ  
with man, corporall and spirituall,  
joyntly, or merely spirituall, P. 84, &c.  
The spirituall presence of Christ with  
man upon earth, is common or speciall,

P. 85, &c.

To have Christ specially present with  
our spirits, is the ready way to all temporall good,  
P. 87

Objections to the contrary answered,  
P. 88, &c.

To have Christ specially present with  
our spirits, is the way to all spirituall  
good,  
P. 91, &c.

To have Christ after a speciall manner  
with

## The Contents.

with our spirits is the ready way to eternal good, P.95.

Not to have Christ specially present with our spirits is a great evil, P.97.

Wherein this grand evil doth principally consist. P.99, &c.

How to know whether Christ be specially present with our spirits, P.107, &c.

How to get Christ to be specially present with our spirits, P.112, &c.

Men that find Christ specially present with their spirits, should thankfully acknowledge this great favour, P.115, &c.

Such should labour to keep Christ with their spirits, P.118.

According to what operations, a man may lose the presence of Christ, page 119, &c.

Christians should labour to get Christ as much present with their spirits as may be: and how this may be done; see page 121, 123, &c.

---

## The Contents.

---

*Comfort against the sword, plague,  
famine, persecution, and the like, a-  
rised to them which have Christ speci-  
ally present with their spirits, Page  
125, 126, &c.*



The Church of Christ is a building  
 of living stones, each a member  
 of the body, of his flesh and  
 of his bones, and he himself  
 is the head, the saviour of  
 the church, which he himself  
 hath purchased with his  
 own blood, to cleanse  
 unto himself a peculiar  
 church, zealous of good  
 works.

# CHRISTS COMMUNION

with

His Church Militant.

JOHN 14. vers. 18.

*I will not leave you comfortlesse; I will  
come to you.*

**CHRIST** and his Church are dear  
each to other: the truth of this is  
manifest in this Chapter.

Christ as a heavenly Husband, being to leave  
his earthly Spouse; to wit, his Church Mil-  
itant, and to live with his Father at his  
right hand in glorie, with his Church Tri-  
umphant; endeaoureth with various ver-  
ses of this chapter, to comfort the sad spirit  
of his Beloved Spouse, which he perceived  
was much dejected, The verse which I

B

have

have chosen to insist on, is one of them: *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.* In more words let me repeat this verse again; *Thou, O my Love, my Dove, my fair One, art sad I see, and disconsolate at my departure! As a Lillie in the valley; may, as a Lillie (indeed) among thorns I shall leave thee: the Prince of darknesse dwelling in the children of darknesse will endeavour to devour thee; Sons of Belial will beset thee, persecute and torment thee, as they have done me before thee: but be not at this dismayed, O fairest of women! dejected, as one without all consolation: for I will not leave thee comfortlesse, I will come to thee.*

What difference is there between a prison-house and mine own house, if sweet friends continually come to me there? 'Tis a prison and no better we abide in, whilst we dwell in the body: fetter'd we are with many lusts, and groane we do, under the tyrannie and oppression of a body of death; and O wretched men that we are, dwelling in these dungeons of clay, if no friend from Heaven come to us? 'Tis true, O my Spouse, what thou sayest; and therefore that thy dwelling in the body may not be comfortlesse, I will come to thee. *I will*

*not leave thee comfortlesse, I will come, &c.*

The bodie is a prison to the soul, and the world is a hell to both. The God of this world is a Devil, and the children of this world Devils, to the spouse of Christ. The father torments her spirit; and the children torment her flesh: neither in body nor soul, whilest in this world, can the spouse of Christ be quiet. We that are thus in hell upon earth, shall quickly be comfortlesse, if no friend from Heaven come to us. True, Oh my spouse: but to prevent this, *I will come to thee.* From Heaven to Earth (indeed) is a long journey; but yet this I will not stand on; rather then thou shalt be left comfortlesse, in any condition upon earth, I will from Heaven come to thee. Let it be what weather it will, at what time it will, and be at mid-night thou need'st me, I will come to thee; *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

Affliction hath made many friends upon earth for sake me, O my Saviour! wilt not thou my heavenly friend so serve me? What if the Devil cast me into prison? wilt thou come to me there? wilt thou visit me when I lie in a nastie room, amongst nastie wretches, that curse and swear, which thou

canst not endure to heare? Yea, O fairest of women! rather then thou shalt be comfortlesse in such a condition; *I will come to thee.*

Thou wilt come to me, O my Saviour, one day; but what if the Devil keep me in such a prison *ten dayes*? along time? till the *iron enter into my soul*? will thou not wax wearie at last, and leave coming to me? No my Love, I am resolved to the contrarie; [*I will*] *not leave thee comfortlesse* [*I will*] *come to thee.*

Why, but what if Satan winnow me as wheat, and cast me into sinne, which is more odious to thee then any prison, then any place, or any thing: wilt thou not then shake me off for ever, and never come to me more? This, O fairest of women! may make me cease coming to thee *for a moment*; but no longer: for I am resolved not to [*leave*] *thee comfortlesse* in any condition, either of sinne or punishment. *I will not* [*leave*] *thee comfortlesse*, [*I will*] *come to thee.*

My Text, you see, is Christs conjugal promise to his Spouse, of all kindnesse, during the time of his personall absence. The matter of this promise is consolatorie; the form according to which our Saviour expresseth this consolatorie language; is first

negative

negative; *I will not leave you comfortlesse.* Secondly, affirmative; *I will come to you.* These latter words contain the reason of what is delivered in the former. We cannot be comfortlesse; [ *because* ] Christ still comes to us. And thus taking the words, you may reade them thus, *viz. I will not leave you comfortlesse, [ for ] I will come to you.* No condition can be comfortlesse, if Christ come to us.

*I will not leave you comfortlesse,* Οὐκ ἀπολείψω ὑμᾶς ἀπαρῶς, *I will not leave you fatherlesse and motherlesse.* *I will not leave you Orphans,* faith the Originall, ὁ πατήρ ὁ οὐκ ἀπολείψει ὑμᾶς, *that is here translated comfortlesse.* which signifies, to be made fatherlesse and motherlesse; which becaute it is usually a condition very comfortlesse, therefore is the word thus rendred, ἀπαρῶς, *comfortlesse.* Thus the children of Christ shall not be left. They are no *Orphans* which have Christ for their Father. They are never totally bereft of all comfort, to whom Christ comes: and thus he will still do to his Church Militant. Christ will never leave coming from Heaven to earth, although it be a very long journey, as long as he hath any one child upon earth. *I will not leave you comfortlesse.*

*I will come to you,*] ἐρχομαι πρὸς υἱάς, *I return to you,* faith the Originall; spoken in the Present Tense, and not in the Future, *] I will*] *return to you,* as we have it translated, *Ac si diceret Christus* (faith one) *se licet nondum profectum, iam esse in reditu;* As if Christ had said, although I am not yet gone from you, yet am I returning to you. Christ though not actually in person departed, yet was ready in spirit to be present with his Spouse to the end of the world.

Thus having paraphrastically gone over these words, I will put the plain meaning of them into this *Thesis* in Divinitie, *That the Church of Christ Militant shall not be left comfortlesse, because Christ will come to her.* Or thus, *no child of Christ upon earth, shall be left comfortlesse, for Christ will come to him.* What Christ spake at his departure to his Disciples, was not for them onely, but for the comfort of all his people to the end of the world. In his Disciples he spake thus to all his children, that are or ever shall be upon the face of the earth, *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

This comfortable doctrine, that I may fully and methodically handle, I will lay open unto you these four things: First, that

Christ

Christ doth come to his children upon earth. Secondly, how Christ doth come to his children upon earth. Thirdly, when Christ doth come to his children upon earth. Lastly, why Christ will take so much pains, as to come to his children on earth? I begin with the first of these, to wit, that Christ doth come to his Church and children upon earth. The truth of this is evident by our Saviours own language, and by each godly mans experience.

Our Saviour, not onely in my Text, but in many other places promised to come to his Church Militant, and therefore surely he doth come to his people on earth: for Christ is God, *and God cannot lie, nor repent.* What Christ hath said he will do, that he will faithfully perform to a tittle: *for faithfull is he that hath promised*, saith the Apostle. *Go therefore and teach all nations, &c. teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you alwayes, even to the end of the world.* *Acts* men, *March.* 28. 19, 20. This place shewes plainly, that Christ doth come to his children upon earth; and that he will do this to the end of the world. For Ministers (of all men) to walk faithfully in their places,

teaching their flock to observe [all] things that *Christ hath given them in charge*; will cost them hot water, especially living in corrupt places. This our Saviour tenderly considered: and therefore that his Disciples might not be disheartned, he assures them of his company unto the last, to support and comfort them: *Lo, I am with you to the end of the world.* Christ by this phrase of speech doth bid us, that what he then spake, should reach further then unto those to whom then he appeared: namely, to all Ministers and people *to the end of the world*, that shall faithfully discharge their places and callings to his honour.

I might here tell you, that not onely Christs word; but also Christs name sets forth the truth of this, that Christ is with his Church Militant, and so consequently, that he doth come to her. He was called *Emanuel*, which being interpreted, *Is God with us*, Mar. 1. 23. Which name was not onely to note Christ, as then corporally present with his Church: but to note Christ as one having actually assumed our nature, and so to be more gloriously present with his Church to the end of the world; then ever from the beginning after *Adams* fall. Now as the

said

said of her husband, as his name is, so is he; *Nabal is his name, and folly is with him*: so may the Spouse speak of her Husband Christ; as his name is, so is he. *Emanuel* is his name, which signifies *God with us*, and so indeed is Christ. He is continually with us. What *David* said of himself, in respect of Christ; that may we truly say of Christ, in respect of us. *Nevertheless* (saith he) *I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by my right hand*. Though Christ dwell in Heaven, and we on earth; yet nevertheless he is continually coming to us, and abiding with us.

The godly have, and do find the truth of this by blessed experience, which is the second thing; and that which I rather insist on, for the confirmation of the truth in hand; because against experience there is no disputation. *Peter* found the truth of this, that Christ comes to his children upon earth, that their condition may not be comfortlesse. *Herod* cast *Peter* into prison, and thought to have made him comfortlesse; but Christ came to him, as you may see. *And behold* (saith the Text) *the Angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison; and*

he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, *Arise up quickly, and his chains fell off from his hand.* The Jews by a storm of stones thought to have made *Steven* comfortlesse, but Christs coming to him prevented it, Christ so gloriously came to him in that deadly storm, that he found more comfort (I believe) then ever he did before in his life: for he looked up stedfastly into *Heaven*, and saw the glorie of God, and *Jesus standing at the right hand of God*: he saw the Heavens opened ready to receive him, which transcendently revived him: which glorious vision he could never have seen, had not Christ come to him. *Paul* likewise found the truth of this point, when he had left *Athen*, and came to preach to the *Gentiles* at *Corinth*: he was very fearfull what successe he should find in his Ministerie, amongst the barbarous *Gentiles*. Now our tender Saviour, that *Paul* might not be overborn with fear, and made heartlesse and comfortlesse, graciously comes to him in a vision, as you may read. *Then spake the Lord to Paul by night in a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee; & no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this Citie.* Thus

at another time Christ came to *Paul*, that he might not be left comfortlesse, when he was pleading his cause before *Ananias*, and like to be pull'd in pieces: *And the night following* (saith the Text) *the Lord stood by him, and said; Be of good cheer Paul, for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou also beare witnesse at Rome.* At another time, *Act. 23. 11. Paul and Silas together* had experience of this truth, that Christ comes to his Church Militant. As they were powering out their souls together in prayer, Christ wonderfully came to them: he came in an Earthquake, and made the foundations of the prison shake, & so opened all the prison doors, and loosed everie prisoners bonds. Comfortable was Christs coming to *Paul* and *Silas*, but terrible to the Gaoler; for he seeing in what manner Christ broke in and rescued his servant, would have killed himself; but Christ came graciously to his soul also, and refused it out of the hands of the Devill. Happie was it for this man, that Christ did finish two works in one journey; to wit, come to *Paul* and *Silas*, and deliver their bodies out of prison, and withall come to their Gaoler, and deliver his soul out of prison too. In an Earthquake Christ came both to Prisoners and Gaoler: for the Gaol-

ler came trembling to the Prisoners of hope, as a man in despair; and fell down, saith the Text, *before Paul and Silas*. 'Tis no matter how Christ come to us, so he comfort us before he leave us. Thus I have shewed to you, that C H R I S T doth come to his Church Militant.

The second thing that I am to shew you, for the opening of the point; is, how Christ doth come to his Church Militant. To this I will answer, First, more generally, and briefly: Secondly, more particularly and fully. More generally and briefly, I answer thus: Christ visits his Church Militant; as *David* visited and comforted *Hannah*, to wit, mediately by his spirit, as *David* did mediately by his servants. And I will pray the Father, *Et he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth,* &c. *Joh. 14, 16, 17. Peter* found the truth of this, that Christ by his Spirit comes now to his Church Militant. *While Peter thought on the vision, [the Spirit] said unto him, behold three men seek thee*. But in the second place, that I may more particularly and fully answer to this question; to wit, how Christ doth come to his Church Militant, to comfort her in all conditions; I will lay before you the general

conditions of mankind: and shew you how Christ by his Spirit, as a Comforter, comes to us in them. The generall conditions of mankind are two, *prosperitie* and *adversitie*.

Prosperitie would soon bring the souls of Gods people to a comfortlesse condition, did not Christ by his Spirit come to them. Satan, that evil spirit is so busy, coming to the children of God, when in prosperitie, that did not Christ also come to them by his Almighty Spirit, to quench all his fiery darts, their souls would soon be comfortlesse, the Lord knows. When *Peter* was warm in the High Priests Hall, then the devil by a damsell came to him, and so farre he prevail'd on him, that had not Christ lookt back upon him, and by his Spirit come to him, he had been in a comfortlesse condition indeed. And thus would the condition of good men now be, which are warm in their nests with outward things, did not Christ come to them: when the sons of God be honourable, and great amongst the sonnes of men, as *David* and *Solomon*, *Job*, *Jacob*, and *Abraham* were; then the devil in point of policie, though not out of love, visits them often; and by often coming to them then, draws their precious

souls

souls into many finnes, as pride, ambition, malice, sensualitie, and the like; which like Cankers, quickly fret and eat out all divine consolation in the soul, and leave it like the Prodigall feeding upon husks; solacing it self with no other joy and content, then what the bare creature dipt in sinne will afford the sense; which, you must needs say, is of all comfortlesse conditions the most and worst comfortlesse. Now that these may not be left in this comfortlesse state, to perish eternally, Christ by his Spirit thus comes to them. First in a sweet still voice behind them, as the Prophet speaks, saying sometimes in the midst of their sensualitie; this is not the way to eternall joy: no, this is the way, O sensuall soul, walk in it.

This still voice strikes a damp in the merrie sensuall soul of a Christian, and makes his heart in the midst of vain laughter, sad. If this be not prevalent enough to turn him, but on again he will in his sinfull way; then Christ comes with a witnesse, in thundering and lightning, to convince and sting the conscience, as he did to the Israelites, to bring them to see their wickednesse in chusing a King, untill God thunder'd and lightning'd from heaven fearfully, they laid not

to heart their rejecting God as their King, but went on strongly and unaffectedly in their way. And just thus oft times it is, with many of the sonnes of God in prosperitie: the still voice of Christ sweetly suggesting, and mildly checking for sinne, is not strong enough to stop and turn them; untill the Angel of the Covenant come down into the conscience, and stand with a flaming sword, threatening nothing but Hell and Death, if they make on a step further, they stop nor turn not; which though not Christs naturall carriage to his children, yet he will in tender love deny himself thus farre, as to put on an affrighting Vizzard upon his smiling countenance, and come terribly, and save violently, by plucking his children out of the fire, rather then he will leave any of his so comfortlesse, as to perish remedlesse. Christ will speak out and speak plain, as he did to *David* by *Nathan*, when a still voice, and secret silent hints and becks will not do, He will come and lay his mouth to a mans eare and cry aloud, when he perceives that the pleasure or profit of sinne hath made him very deaf: he will never leave crying and calling, striking, and knocking, till he hath made the deaf soul heare, and humble himself

himself with *Peter* and *David*, and then he pulls off the terrible Vizzard from his countenance, and looks upon the mourning penitent, with a countenance like *Lebanon* and his lips drop sweet smelling myrrh, into his broken spirit: and so is not left comfortlesse, according to Christs promise, *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

But suppose *Sarah* should not be busie, coming to the sonnes of God in prosperitie; yet would worldly prosperitie be a comfortlesse condition should not Christ by his Spirit come to them. Riches and honours, together with all other delights of the sonnes of men; they are as the white of an Egge, things without favour, unlesse Christ come along with them to us: they tire and wearie, prick, distract and vex a man: they rob him of his sleep, and many times of his wits, nay of his precious life: they drown mens souls in pride, voluptuousnesse, securitie, and so set them in the next way to hell. This snare waits at every ungodly mans table, which makes prosperitie to him comfortlesse. This snare, that it may not catch the godly, Christ comes to them by his Spirit. & sanctifies prosperitie to them: *He teaches them how to abound*; that is, how to use

use the creature, as to enjoy service and comfort from it: and to bring honour and glory by it.

*The creature is emptie of what it promises; and enticing with what it hath: and this makes prosperitie to every carnall man, a comfortlesse condition. Now to take off both these; Christ comes to his children which enjoy the creature plentifully: he comes in the creature, and so cures the emptinesse of it: that is, by his blessing he makes it satisfiable and contentfull to the enjoyer, which it is not of it self: this is the peculiar gain that attends the godly: Christ comes in the creature to them, and so cures the emptinesse of it, and puts such a supernatural all virtue and sweetnesse in it, that they are therewith contented. And as Christ comes [in] the creature to cure the emptinesse of it, so he comes [with] the creature, to cure the enticing of it. He doth by the creature lead the souls of his children to the Creatour: by the sweet of the one, he lifts up their souls to heaven, to admire the sweetnesse of the other: so that, that which others are enticed and besotted with, and rest in, that they take wing from to flee to heaven, whence comes every good and perfect gift, which*

which is that indeed that makes prosperitie a comfortable condition, which otherwise is comfortlesse enough the Lord knows.

Secondly, adversitie would be a comfortlesse condition to the godly, if Christ by his Spirit did not come to them: This I suppose none will deny; *For no affliction in it self is comfortable or joyfull*, but comfortlesse, if Christ by his Spirit do not come to us. Corporall affliction is a comfortlesse condition, unlesse Christ come to us, and be our Physician. Spirituall affliction is a more comfortlesse condition, if Christ do not come to us.

Here these two questions are necessary to be answered: First, how doth Christ come to us in corporall affliction? Secondly, how doth Christ come to us in Spirituall affliction?

To these questions both together, I thus answer: Christ the Physician of soul and bodie, comes to both with comfort in one way; and that is by helping the soul to apply the promises of God, which are surable to his distresse. If a child of God be sad and sorrowfull, because of corporall affliction, Christ comes to him by his Spirit, with this comfortable language, *I am all sufficient*. Christ by his Spirit, spreads abroad this

Cardinall promise before the sad soul, and shews him what a depth of mercy is folded up in it. There is a sufficiencie of wisdom in me, to find out wayes and means to deliver thee, though never so low brought. There is likewise a sufficiencie of power, to prosecute right means to accomplish their right end. Nay, there is a sufficiency in me, to work about good for thee, O sad soul, without means.

There's a sufficiencie of affection and will to declare power and wisdom, with every attribute else, for thy good. If for all this application and amplification of a generall promise, the soul still droop under some corporall calamitie; Christ doth then in such a soul, as *Jacobs* sons and daughters did for him, *They rose up* (saith the Text) *and comforted him*, Gen. 37. 35. So Christ by his Spirit, after a lively manner indeed, rises up in such a soul to comfort him: and now he leads this mourning Christian to some particular promise; that is, such a promise as speaks not of deliverance in generall, but of deliverance in particular, out of this or that kind of distresse, which he groans under. As to give you an instance; suppose a Christian be sad and take thought,

as Christ saith, *What he shall eat, and what he shall drink, and where withall he shall be clothed*: then the Comforter comes with this particular promise, which speaks of deliverance out of this particular distresse: *First, seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*: take therefore no thought for to morrow, for to morrow shall take thought for *these things*. *it self* Mat. 6. 33, 34. If yet for all this, the spirit of a Christian still complain, as one fearing he shall want daily bread for him and his; then the Comforter comes, and perswades the soul to rest quietly upon the promise of God. He speaks now to the complaining Christian, as the Levites father in law said to him, *Comfort thy self, I pray thee, with a morsell of bread*, Judges 19. Comfort thy self. O mourning soul? I pray thee, with this particular promise, which is but a morsell of that bread, which came down from heaven, one of the least favours that Christ hath procured for thee, to wit, a right and interest in the creature: with this persuasive language, doth Christ follow the complaining soul, untill he hath perswaded him to own his own mercy? and so he keeps his children in povertie, from being comfortlesse.

As Christ in corporall afflictions comes to his children, and keeps them from being comfortlesse; so likewise he comes to them in spirituall afflictions, that they may not be left comfortlesse. If a child of God be sad and sorrowfull, because of this or that strong temptation; the Comforter then comes to him with this sweet language: *My grace is sufficient for thee.* Thou prayest, and Satan tempts thee; thou doest fast and pray, and yet Satan and thy lusts are more violent upon thee; thou doest all this with bitter tears, and Satan is the more bitterly bent against thee; and thou art soild every moment. By this, O winnowed soul! Christ would shew thee, that thou wilt be comfortlesse, in the midst of all thy sore labour, unlesse he come to thee. *This same shall comfort us, concerning the work and toil of our hands, said Lamach of Noah:* so may we say of Christ; this same must comfort us, concerning the labour and toil of our souls with any temptation: or else we shall be comfortlesse, though we labour never so much. And this Christ doth and will do, *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

If a Christian lie languishing, because of  
satans

Satans prevailing upon him by temptation; that we may not be comfortlesse in this condition, Christ by his Spirit comes to him, and shews him the fountain of his blood, how deep it is, and how free it is. How deep it is, that it will drown all sinne; Sinnes after conversion, as well as before: sinnes often repeated, as well as sinnes onely committed. And then he shews the wounded soul, how free this fountain is, for any that *hunger and thirst for it, for any that are weary and heavy laden*, 1. John 1. 7. and desire to be eased by it; and so by degrees draws the wounded soul, to wash his wounds in it by faith, and so Christ heals and comforts him. As the brethren of *Ephraim* comforted him, when he mourned because the men of *Gath* had slain his son, 1. *Chro.* 7. 22. so Christ comes to us, and comforts us, when the devil by his temptations hath almost slain our souls; he like the good Samaritane, poures in oyl and wine into our wounds, and cures us. Though Satan passe by, and his limbs passe by, and leave us comfortlesse in the day of wounds and bleeding, yet Christ cannot, so full of bowels is he, nor will not, *I will not leave you comfortlesse, &c.*

If a Christian lie languishing because of  
often

often and frequent relapses, after promises and purposes to do better; If this Christian in the anguish of his spirit speak to every godly friend, as the Prophet did to his, *Therefore said I, Look away from me, I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of the daughter of my people; Isa. 22.4.* Look away from me, O ye my Christian friends! yea, and you, my faithful Minister; for I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, because of the spoiling of my soul, by so often sinning, against vows and promises, favours and blessings: Christ comes to this soul, and will not leave him comfortless in this condition, (though it be indeed a very desperate condition). The Comforter usually takes this course, with this comfortless soul, to poure in some oyl into his deep wounds: he reasoneth with him from the mercie of man, to the mercie of God; from a drop to the Ocean; and it may be, fastens upon his own language, once delivered to Peter; *Peter came to our Saviour and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sinne against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee untill seven times, but untill seventie times seven,* Matth. 18. 21, 22.

From

From this speech the Comforter thus reasoneth with this sad and sore wounded soul, *viz.* If Christ would have *Peter*, a sinful man, shew so much mercy to one so often offending him; surely Christ, a holy God, and infinite in love, is ready to shew much more compassion Himself, to those that are penitent, though they have sinned times without number against him. Thus the Comforter leads this desperate Christian, as a weak wounded man, by the hand; from the mercy of man, to the mercy of God: and enables him this way, after some space of time, to take in comfort: for Christ is resolved he will not leave this Christian comfortlesse. Christ will never leave coming to this comfortlesse soul, with this speech of his to *Peter*, and others of like nature (as Christ is well furnisht for a comforter) untill he hath brought him to drink willingly (for Christ forceth no Physick upon any Patient) of the cup of consolation more or lesse; and the longer sick-souls turn away their heads from this cup; the more (many times) he perswades them to drink at last.

If Christ *rentandi gratia*, for trialls sake, hide himself from a Christian, and so set him a mourning, I shall shew you by and by,

how

how he comes to him. This is a condition (though of all deserted conditions, the best) which will make a Christian heart comfortable indeed. *Thou dost hide thy face, and I was troubled*, Psal. 30.7. Gods hiding his face, though but for trials sake, will so trouble a Christian, that he will quickly be a burden to himself, *and fear round about*, as it is said of *Passur*. "I will make him weary of the night, and weary of the day; weary of his own house, and weary of Gods house; weary of mirth, & account it madness; weary of riches, honours, yea life it self, and wish for death; *that I might have my request, and that God would grant me the thing that I long for, even that it would please God to destroy me, that he would let his hand loose & cut me off; then should I yet have comfort*: then should I see the face of God, which I long like *Moses* to see; then would he lift up the light of his loving countenance, and cause his face to shine gloriously upon me, whereas now I walk in the valley & shadow of death; dark dayes are all that go over my head; the glorious Sunne of righteousness shines not up: on my soul from morning to night. To this sad soul thus bemoaning himself for want of his beloved, Christ his well beloved thus

comfortably comes, There hath no temptation taken hold on thee yet, O mourning soul! but that which is common to man: and be assured of this; that God is faithful by whom thou art tempted, and will not try thee above that which thou art able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that thou maist be able to bear it, 1. COR. 12. 15. For a moment, O fairest of women, I saw just cause to hide my face from thee, to try the truth of thy love to me: but know; that with everlasting kindnesse will I have mercy on thee. Thy dulnesse also in my service, and thy low-prizing my company, did something trouble me; but know that the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my kindnesse shall never depart from thee: for this is as the waters of Noah unto me; as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. O thou afflicted, and tossed with tempest, and not comforted; behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with Saphirs, and I will make thy windows of Agats, and thy gates of Carbuncles, & all thy borders of pleasant Saphirs, Isa. 45 8, 9. Out of this sweet language of the Prophet

phet to the naturall branch; the Comforter will fetch such precious water of life, to revive his deserted soul: with these kisses of his lips will he so comfort him; that he shall be constrained to say with David; *Thou which hast shewed me great troubles, hast quickened me again, & hast brought me up again from the depths of the earth; thou hast increased my joy, and comforted me on every side, Psal. 71.6.* I could hitherto, O my God! see thy back-parts; some sad attributes of power and justice, which did terrifie my soul to look on; but lo, now I see thy glory, thou hast caused it gloriously to passe by me; nay, to shine upon me: I see thy face like Lebanon comely as the Cedars; and herewith is my longing soul satisfied, as with marrow and fatness. *This is my comfort in mine affliction; for thy Spirit, O Christ! by thy word hath revived me.* So that this Soul; though very sorrowfull; yet is not left comfortlesse neither. Thus I have answered the second Question, to wit, how Christ comes to us.

The third thing that I am to shew you is, When Christ comes to us. *I will not leave you comfortles, I will come to you.* But when, O my Saviour, wilt thou come to us? To this I answer first more generally; then more

particularly and determinately. More generally and briefly, I answer thus, Christ is already come, and is present with his Church Militant, and will be to the end of the world, as hath been already proved. *I am come into my garden, my Sister, my Spouse, I have gathered my Myrrh with my Spice; I have eaten my honeycombe with my honey: I have drunk my wine with my milk,* Cant. 5. 1. Christ we see by this sweet language is come, and is with us already. *I am come,* &c.

But when will he come to me in particular, as a Comforter? This is the question. To this I answer, first negatively, then positively. Negatively I answer thus: *viz.* Christ doth not come to us in this valley of tears, as *Aaron* was commanded to come into the holy place: *Let him not come at all times,* saith the Lord, *lest he die,* Levit. 16. 2. If Christ should not come to us at all times of our distresse, we should die under our burden, so comfortlesse would be our condition. When my body is afflicted, I shall be comfortlesse, if Christ do not come to me. When my soul is afflicted, I shall be more comfortlesse, if Christ do not graciously come to me. When my head akes, reeth akes, back akes, or belly akes: yea, when my least

finger,

finger, or joynt in my body akes, I shall be comfortlesse, unlesse Christ come to me, so dolourous and comfortlesse a creature is man.

Wherefore as a positive answer, to the question ere-while proposed, know that Christ comes to his Church Militant at all times; as long as his people live in this valley of tears, and are in any distresse of soul or body. He comes to them in prosperity, to sweeten that, or else there would be but a little comfort and sweetnesse in it; but he comes to them in all adversity, after a more speciall manner to sweeten that, being of it self very bitter; bitternesse in the abstract; my meaning is, altogether bitter, without the least sweetnesse or pleasure in it to soul or body: for no affliction is in the least manner or measure joyous, but as Christ by his kind coming to us then, makes it so.

But here I shall be thus questioned; viz. If Christ as a Comforter comes to his Church Militant, in every distresse of soul and body; how is it that many of Gods children, in corporall and spirituall afflictions utter comfortlesse and hopelesse language, as those that find no Comforter come to them? *Is thy mercy clean gone, and hast*

*thou forgotten to be gracious? (saith David) hast thou shut up thy loving kindnes in displeasure? and wilt thou be no more intreated? &c.* Many such like sad and dolorous complaints are still uttered by some of Gods dear children: now if Christ as a comforter, come to his in every distresse; why is it thus with these?

To this I will give answer first more indirectly thus; Possibly that soul which thus complains, cannot but confesse, that Christ hath come and rendred comfort to him, though he through anguish and unbelief refused it. Now if our soul-Physician come from heaven to us, and bring cordials for us, and we will not take them, but cast them behind our backs, shall our Physician be blamed for unfaithfulness and negligence towards his patients, as one that did not visit them?

Again, possibly too, this soul which thus complains, must confesse that Christ came to him, at the very beginning of his untractableness towards God, and told him that this would quickly bring him into a comfortable condition, if not timely lookt unto; and bid him again, and again, by a sweet still voice behind him, to be more pliable

to God, as he rendered his favour, & his own comfort. Christ came to his spouse, saying, *Open to me my Sister, my Love, my Dove, my fair one: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* But though Christ thus kindly come to his spouse, yet she unkindly put him off; and upon the matter no better then slighted him; *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?* &c. Because of this untractable carriage, Christ departed from his spouse, and then she made many complaints; *I opened to my Beloved, but he had withdrawn himself and was gone.* The spouse could not now truly say, that Christ had not come to her; but she might truly say, that he did come to her, but she slighted him, and therefore he was forced to leave her. Thus 'tis with many now. They mourn like *Rachel* in their misery, and are not comforted, because none from heaven comes to them: such as these, cannot challenge Christ, for not making good his promise, to come to them, if formerly he have come to them, and they have slighted him. If my Physician, observing my intemperancy in this or that, come to me and tell me, Unless you refrain such and

such things, you will certainly fall into such and such diseases. which are very dangerous; if I flighr him in this, and afterward fall into those diseases, and lie groaning under them, I cannot blame my Physician for not coming to me, but blame my self that did so flighr him. So 'tis between Christ and many a mourning soul; Christ hath come to them and told them, that if they go on in their sinfull course, it will rob them quire of their heavenly comforts; but he in this friendly way hath been so far taken with the sweetnesse of something below Christ, and so at last hath found the evil of his owne way, according to Christs prediction, and yet complains of Christ not coming to him; but how justly judge you.

Again, as this soul possibly cannot justly complain that Christ hath not come to him; so possibly he cannot justly complain that Christ is not come to him. That soul which complains after Christ, cannot truly say that Christ is not come to him: for we never truly desire to come to Christ, or that Christ should come to us, unlesse he were already with us, and we with him. Christ, I conclude then, is come to this complaining soul,

soul, though not in that manner and measure as he desires him. The thought of what I long for, if I have the least hope of attaining it, is a degree of consolation.

Finally and more directly, I answer to this complaining soul thus: Christ as a sensible and satisfactorie Comforter comes to us at his time, and not at ours. Now Christs time to comfort mourners will make him most welcome; and that is usually when the soul is brought to the greatest extremities that it is capable of, and not utterly miscarry, When *Peter* was ready to sink on the sea, and cried out, *Master, save me, or I perish*, then Christ came to him, and caught him by the hand: thus doth Christ usually come with sensible and satisfactory consolations, when poore souls are almost quite spent with temptations, and soul anguish, and look every houre when they shall die and drop into hell. *He shall come to us, as the former and latter rain unto the earth*, saith the Prophet. That is, at the seasonablest time, when the soul will make him most welcome; and that is, when burnt and scorcht with satans fierie darts as the earth with the heat of the sunne; when parcht and chapt, gaping for some heavenly showers: then

Christs visits will be kindnesse indeed: and Christs consolations, sweet indeed. This will remember, O mourning soull! that Christ keeps his word, if he do not *leave us comfortlesse*: and this be assured he will not do, *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you*:

But why wilt thou come to me, O my Saviour? To this I answer, first thus, *viz.* Christ will come to his Church Militant to be a Comforter to fulfill his Fathers will. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, saith Christ, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek: He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim libertie to the Captive, & the opening of prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable yeare of the Lord, to comfort all that mourn, &c.* By this Text we see, that Christ is anointed for this end: To come to us and be our Comforter, whilest we live here below mourning in *Sion*. What is said of the three friends of *Job*, that may I say of the blessed Trinitie: *They made an appointment together, to come to comfort him*. So the blessed Trinitie, have made an appointment together to us by Christ; and in all distresses sweetly to comfort us.

Secondly,

Secondly, Christ will come as a comfort-er to his church Militant, because he hath promised it. As Christ promised this in my Text, so in many other Texts. *And if I go away, I will prepare a place for you, and will come again: and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that may abide with you for ever.* By these promises Christ hath obliged himself, to come as a comforter to us: let therefore our deserving of comfort be what they will, Christ will come to us, because he hath promised he will. Christ stands much upon his word: Christ is God, and *God cannot lie. Though we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, and cannot deny himself.* A Christian is ready to say to Christ as *Jephtha* to the Elders of *Gilead*: *Did not ye hate me, and expell me out of my Fathers house? and why are ye come to me now, when ye are in distresse?* said *Jephtha*: so saith a Christian, did not I hate thee, O my Saviour, and did not I do what in me lay to expell thee from my soul, by my sinning again and again against thy Spirit? And why art thou come to me now, to comfort me in my distresse? Why, this that was foresaid, may suffice, O sinfull soul as an answer. Christ looks not at what thou hast done

done, but at what he hath promised, and his word he will keep, though we change as the heavens: heaven and earth shall passe away, but not one jot of his word shall fall to the ground. *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

These I conceive are the principall grounds, why Christ comes as a Comforter to his Church Militant: two grounds more may be alledged, as *Causæ minis principales*, lesse principall causes; the first whereof is this: Christ comes to us in our distresses as a Comforter, that we may not stretch out our hands unto iniquity. Man in distresse is so desirous of ease, that if Christ do not come to him and comfort him, he will go to sinne and satan for ease. *Cain* was disconsolate, and because Christ did not come to him as a comforter, he ran like a vagabond up and down the world, to find ease in any thing. *Judas* was disconsolate, and because Christ as a comforter did not come to him, he made a halter his comforter. *Saul* being in distresse by the *Philistines*, because Christ did not come to him by *Urim*, nor by Vision, nor by Prophets, he went to the devil for comfort. Now that Christs children may not thus do, *Christ will not leave them*

*them comfortlesse, but will come to them.*

The second ground why Christ will come to his Church Militant as a comforter, is this: That he may stop the mouthes of all ungodly wretches, who say of the godly, when in great distresses, *Persecute and take them, for there is none to deliver them.* A wicked man looking upon a wounded soul with a carnall eye, breaks out into some such language, as *Archib* did concerning *David*. *Lo you see the man is mad.* This man is a distracted person, fitter for Bedlam, then for Gods house: an idle crack-brain fellow, unfit to come into solemne assemblies. Now that Christ may silence such black mouth'd men as these, he graciously comes to such wounded souls, and heals their broken hearts, and binds up their wounds; he poures the spirit of consolation upon such as went mourning all the day long, and makes them walk with joy and strong consolation, so that such as censured them for this and that, are forced to lay their hand upon their mouth, and to condemne themselves as blind Bats, and not able to discern the wayes of God towards his children.

Having thus opened the point in hand, I will in the next place shew you how usefull

it

It is, to the wicked and to the godly. Will not Christ leave any of his children upon earth comfortlesse, but still as a comforter come to them? Then you which live in your sinnes, and so consequently none of Christs children; may collect the unhappinesse of your condition from this point. You shall live and die comfortlesse, for Christ will not come to you as a Comforter; thus he comes onely to his children. Christ will not come to you in prosperitie as a comforter; and therefore in the midst of sensuall laughter, your hearts will be sad: in the midst of all thy worldly contents, thy spirit will at times gnaw and beat within thee: and never will all thou enjoyest give any complacencie of comfort to thee, because Christ as a comforter comes not to thee. All outward comforts, without the inward consolations of Christ, they are as good broth unseasoned, which rather cloyes then contents the appetite; they weary, distract, and vex, and not revive the owner. Be it, that thou art as wile as *Achitophel*, as eloquent as *Herod*, as learned as *Gamaliel*, as rich as *Nabal*, as honourable as *Haman*, as great in the Church as *Judas*; why, yet shalt thou live comfortlesse; that is, utterly destitute

ture of celeſtiall conſolation ; one drop whereof hath more ſoul-reviving ſweetneſſe in it, then all the things of this life can afford. Alas! what is learning? what is wit, wealth, honour, or any other worldly thing to comfort me, if Chriſt do not come to me? A man may have all that this world can afford, and yet hang himſelf for want of comfort, if Chriſt come not to him, as *Mebibephel, Judas*, and others have done.

*Ob.* No men laugh lowder, nor laugh oftner then wicked men in proſperitie: no man merrier in an Alehouſe, Playhouſe, Tavern, Fair or Market, then they: and are not theſe then the onely comfortable men in the world?

*Sol.* To this I anſwer firſt thus: Laughter is one thing, and ſpiritual conſolation another thing. Every one that laughs, hath not a cheerful ſpirit within: for in the miſt of laughter a mans heart may be ſad, ſaith *Solomon*. And ſo on the other hand; every one that hath a comfortable ſpirit, hath not a laughing face: We do not read that Chriſt ever laughed, and yet had more comfort in his ſpirit, then all the merrie men of this world.

Secondly, I anſwer thus: ſome mens ſpi-

rits are so left of God to leuitie and vanities; that they will laugh at the wagging of a straw (as we say.) This is a great judgement of God upon the spirit, and not to be accounted a comfortable and happie condition: *'Tis a pastime to fools to do wickedly,* saith *Solomon*. This is not properly called *mirth* (saith he) but *madnesse*. You shall see mad men laugh sometimes exceedingly, and hoop and hallow, as if their spirits were as full of joy as they could hold: what shall we conclude now, that these forlorn creatures are in a comfortable condition? Alas! say we, if they were but sensible of their condition, they would soon cease laughing, and begin lamenting. And so may I say to you of all that laugh and rejoyce, and yet live in their sinnes, and so consequently have no comforter from heaven come to them, they are mad men: were their eyes open to see their forlorn condition, they would quickly change their note, and turn their mirth into mourning, as *James* saith.

*Quest.* Why, but doth not Christ come to the wicked in prosperitie?

*Answer.* Yes, no doubt to be made of it. Christ came to *Belshazzar* whilst he was quaffing in the golden vessels of the temple, and

and wrote down his wickednesse in the wal. And thus he comes to all ungodly persons in prosperity, to write down all their ungodly deeds, that so he may exactly judge them at the great day of account.

*Quest.* Why, but doth not Christ come as a comforter to wicked men that are great and wealthy?

*Ans.* Christ regards no man for his wealth, or for any externall greatnesse. If a man be never so rich, or never so honourable, yet if he have not denied his lusts, and given up himself to Christ, to be ruled by him, Christ will never come to comfort him if he would give him all he hath for his pains; he will not step a foot out of doors to a Prince, if he be wicked.

*Ob.* Why, but though he will not come to ungodly men as a Comforter in prosperity, when they can make some shift without him, yet he will come to them as a Comforter in adversity, when all other comforts fail.

*Sol.* No he will not. Christ will not know thy soul in adversity, which art a disobeyer of him. As he would not let *Dives* have a drop of water to cool his tongue, though in unutterable torments, where many Oceans would

would not in the least measure have quenched the flames; no neither will he afford thee the least drop of consolation in thy greatest extremities; though thou cry Lord, Lord, and cut thy flesh in the fervency of thy spirit, like *Babbs* Priests, to prevail; yet shalt thou be sent empty away. Nay, Christ will be so farre from being a comforter to ungodly men when in misery; that he will adde to their outward misery, inward misery. When thy body is in distresse, Christ will awaken thy soul, that now lies asleep, and set thy conscience a gnawing within thee, which will be greater torture then if thou wert racked in every limbe. Thou must send for godly Ministers and godly friends to comfort thee then, and they possibly may deliver very comfortable things, but they shall be of no more favour to thy soul, then the whice of an egge; because Christ as a comforter will not speak those sweet things to thy soul, which thy friends do to thy cares. As the Lord bewails the miserable condition of *Jerusalem*; so may I bewail the miserable condition of all ungodly men: *These two things are come unto thee, who shall be sorry for thee? desolation and destruction, and the famine, and the sword: by whom*

*shall*

*shall I comfort thee? to say I to all ungodly persons: misery upon misery will first or last seize upon you. and who then shall be sorie for you? Famine, and sword, and pestilence; sickness, and death, and judgement; and by whom will you be comforted? your Hours cannot comfort you: your Riches and Friends cannot comfort you: your father the devil he will not then comfort you: your conscience which you have often sinned against, shall not comfort you, but torture you; because Christ will not come to you, to sprinkle it with his blood, and to pacifie it. So that I conclude all thus; You will live comfortlesse, die comfortlesse, and abide in hell after death everlastingly comfortlesse.*

*'Tis true all that you say, sir: man is a comfortlesse creature indeed, unlesse Christ come to him, I find it by wofull experience. I have much wealth in my purse, and yet but little peace in my spirit. I see the devil ( me thinks ) now and then, sit astride upon the top of my money-bags, waiting for me, when I come to comfort my self in the beholding of them: and to what this will come at last, I cannot tell. Sinne I am sure I do; and comfortlesse because of sinne, I am: and*

and more comfortlesse every day I look to be, unlesse Christ come to me; and yet how to get him to come to me, I know not.

Wouldst thou, O comfortlesse creature! have Christ to come to thee? Do then to Christ as *Lydia* did to *Paul*, lovingly invite him to come to thee. Make known thy comfortlesse condition to Christ, and then earnestly entreat him to visit thy poore soul. The ground why I exhort thee, O sinner! thus to do is because God hath promised to *give his holy Spirit to them that ask it*, Luke 11. 13. If therefore thou wouldst have Christ by his Spirit to come to thee; invite him, ask him, beg and entreat him to come and dwell in thy soul; and tell him that he shall have every room in thy heart at command. As *Rebekahs* brother said to *Abrahams* servant; so do thou say to Christ; *Come in thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels, &c.* Come in thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without? here is room for thee and all thy glorious train. Here is an understanding, will, memory, affections, they shall be all at thy use and service, O Christ, wherefore come in thou blessed,

fed,

sed of the Lord, and make thy abode with me. Thus continue crying to Christ, and longing for him, and by this thou wilt declare thy great love unto him, and so make thy self capable of that sweet promise, which saith, *If a man love me, the Father loveth him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him* John 14.12. Then will thy condition be comfortable indeed, when thou hast got such glorious in-mates as these to dwell with thee.

Having thus spoken what I thought fit to the wicked by way of application from this point; I will now addresse my self to speak unto the godly, and shew them how usefull this point may be unto them. I shall first speak to strong men, and then unto Babes in Christ: to such as can tell me that Christ as a Comforter is come to them: secondly, to such as can tell me they never yet found Christ as a Comforter come to them: and lastly, to such who can tell me that they have found Christ as a Comforter come to them, but now they have lost him. To you that tell me you find the truth of this doctrine by blessed experience, that Christ is come to you; I have onely two things to say: First this, Make it sure to thy

thy self that Christ indeed as a Comforter is come to thee, and that thy soul is not deluded in thy joy and consolation. Secondly, strive so to walk, that thy Comforter which is come to thee may never depart from thee. First, strive to make it sure, that Christ indeed is come to thee: that the comfort which thou hast is from the Comforter, to wit: the spirit of Christ; and not from the spirit of delusion.

There is great need that I should presse this instruction upon you, because the spirit of delusion is plentifully powered out in these latter dayes. The hypocrite hath his joy; and he judges that this his joy, is the joy of the holy Ghost, and as good as need to be: whereas it is a joy that shall *perish* (saith the Scripture) (a joy that will end in desperate sorrow. He thinks that Christ as a comforter is come to him; whereas it is onely the devil transformed into an Angel of light. And thus indeed are many thousands gulled and cheated in their comfort. Sadnelle would overshadow the smiling face of many a man, if he did but discern how groundlesse his joy and comfort is; and what a vaine shadow in stead of a true substance, his poore soul is deluded withall. Wherefore

fore, my brethren, it concerns you that tell me, you are sensible that the Comforter is come to you, to take pains to make it sure to your selves, that your souls are not deluded.

When the Spirit of God came upon *Saul* that he prophesied, the people that knew him before, said, *What is come to the sonne of Kish, is Saul amongst the Prophets?* Thus do thou say to thy soul, who art so merrie and comfortable, viz. What is come to thee O my soul! that thou art now so joyfull and chearfull? Once I am sure thou wentst mourning all the day long: is Christ as a Comforter come to thee? If Christ by his spirit have brought glad tidings to thee. why then O my glorie! continue in thy mirth: but if not, why art thou so merrie, O my soul? thy mirth is but madnelle. As *David* questioned his soul for sadnelle, saying, *Why art thou so sad, O my soul? and why art thou so cast down within me?* io mayest thou do well to question thy mirth, saying, Why art thou so merrie. O my soul? and why art thou so much lifted up within me? is thy Comforter our Lord Jesus Christ indeed come to thee? O then my glorie! cease not to declare thy comfort, by any comely posture and ge-

sture

sure: but if not, a house of mourning, O my soul, is fitter for thee then a house of mirth; garments of sackcloth and sadnesse would better become thee, then garments of joy & gladnesse. You know how *Isaac* once spake to his son, *Art thou* (saide he) *my very sonne Esau?* Gen. 27.24. so do thou humbly question thy Comforter. Art thou my very Comforter indeed? Art thou the *very Christ* the Sonne of God, which speakest consolation to my soul? You know how *John* questioned Christ much after this manner, that he might not be deceived concerning him: *Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* Marth. 11.3. so do thou say, Art thou he that should come and comfort my soul? or should not I look for another? There be many false Christs, and false comforters now in the world, and they deceive many: wherefore I beseech thee speak out, and speak plainly to my soul, whether thou be he that should comfort me yea or not, that if I have obtained the true Comforter, I may give God the glorie of his great kindness, if not. I may seek out for another.

How should I know (my the strong man in Christ say to me) whether he that is come to my soul with consolation, be he that

that should come, or not? How should I be able to make it sure to my soul, that the consolation which I have is from the spirit of Christ, and not from the spirit of delusion.

To this I thus answer, *viz.* If he that is come to thy soul be he that should come, to wit, Christ; thou shalt find that he doth more works then one in thy soul: he doth not onely comfort thee, but he doth many great works besides this. Christ doth many great works in a mans soul before he comforts him; and he doth many great works in his soul, after he hath comforted him. Christ doth many great works in the soul of man, before he comforts him: he doth break the heart before he binds it up; he first wounds the heart, before he will heal it: he casts down the soul for sinne, before he will raise it up. Now to break the heart of man, which the Scripture compares to an *Adamant*, Zech. 7. 12. for hardnesse, is a great work; and yet this doth Christ thoroughly, before he comforts thoroughly. The breaking of the hard heart of man, hath many great works about it, ere it be effected. The convincing the soul of sinne, which self-conceited man is not easily brought unto.

D

The

The making of sinne out of measure sinfull, in the souls apprehension, which blind man is not easily brought to see. The making of man to loath himself, for the evils which he hath committed against God, which man full of self-love is not easily wrought unto. The making of man to long for peace and reconciliation with God, as the greatest happinesse in the world, and to begge this blessing with tears, as a soul that sees he shall die and perish eternally without it; which man that naturally hates God, is not easily wonne unto. Yet all these difficult works doth Christ do in the soul of man, before he comes as a Comforter to him. Which Christ confirms, where he saith; *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

Now, wouldst thou know whether he that is come to thy soul, be he that should come or not? why then tell me? What did precede thy comfort which now thou hast? Did Christ lead thee to the Wels of Consolation by the waters of *Marah*? Did he bring thee to sow in tears, ere he gave thee to reap thy great harvest of joy? Wast thou ever in the house of mourning? Did the spirit of heavinesse for sinne ever take

hold

hold on thee? Was thy hard heart first broken, and after thus bound up? First wounded, and after thus healed? Didst thou go mourning for dishonouring God all the day long, and a'ter many dolorous dayes spent did thy Comforter come to thee? Surely then he that is come, is he that should come, and do not look for another: but if otherwise; thou hast just cause to be jealous of thy joy.

Again, Christ as he doth great works in the soul before he comforts it; so he doth great works in the soul after he hath comforted it. That soul which Christ comforts, he makes a very fruitfull soul in all grace to his glorie. No waters make the soul of a Christian grow in grace, like the waters of Consolation. The comforting Spirit of Christ is to a Christian in the wayes of obedience, as wind and tide to a Ship: that which makes him runne the wayes of Gods Commandments. That Christian which is comforted by Christ, prayes frequently, and prayes frequently. Consolation gives wings to supplication. That Christian which is comforted by Christ, praiseth God with strong affection. A soul comforted by Christ, is as an instrument well tu-

ned by a skilfull Musician: he will upon every occasion make sweet melodie in the cares of the Almighty. True consolation is from Heaven, and it carries that soul strongly to Heaven in which it is. True consolation is from Christ, and it will make a Christian live wholly to Christ. To whom much is forgiven they love much: and his love constrains them to denie themselves, and to follow Christ unto death.

Wouldst thou know then for certain, O strong man in Christ! that he which is come to thy soul, is he which should come? Why then look what activitie is in thy soul to dutie. Is thy soul as a Gyant refreshed after wine? strong and vigorous to the practise of all good duties? Art thou abundant in the work of the Lord? Art thou a sweet Singer in *Israel* of the praises of the Lord? Is thy heart at thy mouth leaping within thee, like the Babe in *Elizabeths* wombe, when thou art telling what God hath done for thy soul? Art thou (in a word) a holy and heavenly man, as one comforted by a holy and heavenly God? Doth thy joy transcend the joyes that this world affords, in sweetnesse? Doth it raise thy spirit to

admire

admire the love of God? and doth it make thee dead to secular delights? and to account naked carnall mirth madnesse? empty husks for brutes to feed on? Then mayest thou comfortably conclude, that he which is come to thy soul, is he which should come; and do not look for another: but if thou art merry and cheerful, and not holy and heavenly, he that is come to thy soul, is not he that should come; wherefore I beseech thee to look for another.

A second instruction which I would commend to strong men in Christ, is this: after thou hast made it sure to thy soul, that Christ as a comforter is indeed come to thee, then strive so to walk, that he may never depart from thee. So a man may walk that Christ as a comforter may forsake his soul. *David* had wofull experience of this truth, and so doubtlesse have many else of the godly. So a man may walk that Christ as a comforter never departs from him. But how should I thus walk, saith the comforted soul, that I might enjoy this heaven below, till I come to that above, and so go from joy to joy; from joy unspeakable and full of glory, to joy that cannot enter into any mortall heart to conceive of?

To this I thus answer, Do not grieve Christ that is come to thee : Secondly, do all that thou canst to delight him, if thou wouldst have him continually abide with thee. Do not sit down and rest, as one that hath a license to be lazie, and as if all thy work were done, now thy comforter is come to thee ; this will grieve him, and quickly make him leave thee. Thou hast obtained Christ to come a Comforter to thee : well, yet let me tell thee as *Moses* did the *Israelites*; *You are not (said he) as yet come to the rest, & to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you.* So say I to thee, O comforted soul ! thou art not yet come to those degrees of consolation, which thou mayst attain unto in this life, if thou continue to be thrifty. The joy of the holy Ghost is a bottomlesse Well, which thou canst never draw dry : and the more thou drawest, the fresher and sweeter still shalt thou find it. The joy of the holy Ghost is no sursetting thing, as some earthly sweets are : and therefore thou mayest safely say, *Lord, evermore give me of this bread*: fill my soul with flagons of this precious liquor : let thy love be shed abroad in my heart by the holy Ghost; let my soul delight her self in this fatnelle.

Second-

Secondly, now Christ as a comforter is come to thee, do not wax wanton against him, this also will grieve him, and make him quickly forsake thy soul as a Comforter. Let all the manifestations of thy comfort be suitable to thy Comforter; holy as he is holy, spirituall and heavenly, as he is: *When ye are come into the good land, take heed that ye do not forget the Lord (saide Moses to Israel)* so say I to you that find Christ with you as a Comforter, which are come to the fellowship of the Spirit, and to the participation of that transcendent comfort which is by him: take heed that ye grow not giddy-headed, and forget God and your selves, The waters of consolation are strong waters, and mans weak head and heart cannot bear much of them steadily, but are ready to reel on one side or other. When the clouds of heaven have well watered the earth, then do weeds as well as good herbs spring apace: so when Christ by his Spirit, sweetly waters the soul with consolation, then le-vity and vanity as well as Christian mirth and cheerfulnesse spring amain; if a Christian be not very watchfull over his soul, to pluck up such weeds by the roots, as soon as they begin to shew themselves. I con-

elude this thus : Thou that art comforted by the spirit, let not the manifestations of thy comfort grieve the Spirit. This remember, that satan hath an art to bring evil out of the greatest good, as God hath an art to bring good out of the greatest evil : and therefore beg that thou mayst not be ignorant of any of his devices, nor unable to resist them if thou wouldst not loose thy comforter.

Secondly, if thou wouldst have thy comforter to abide still with thee; as thou must not grieve him, so thou must do all that thou canst to delight him. Let it be thy meat and drink to follow all the motions of the spirit of Christ : whithersoever Christ would have thee go, cheerfully obey him; this will delight thy comforter exceedingly, and make him to rejoyce to continue with thee. If Christ say unto thee as to the Fishermen, *Follow me*; do thou readily reply as the Scribe, *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*, Matth. 4. 19. and 8. 19. This is to declare the genuine disposition of Christ's people, which Christ is exceedingly taken withall. Christ's people are a willing people in their obedience: *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*, &c.

Secondly, humbly and compassionately  
tell

rell disconsolate souls, what Christ hath done for my soul: this will delight thy comforter much, and make him rejoyce to continue with thee. Christ delights to see his children communicative of the sweet meats which he gives them. And therefore as *Ja-el* said to *Barak*, so do thou O comforted soul, to such as go mourning all the day long: *Come, (said she) and I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest*, *Jud. 4. 32.* Come, O sad soul, that canst not find him whom thy soul loveth, I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest; the manner of his coming to my poore soul; and how long he made me wait upon him, ere he would come to me; and how well he hath now made me amends for all his staying. And therefore, *Although thou sayest thou shalt not see him, yet judgement is before him, therefore trust thou in him.* *Job 35. 14.* For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie: though it tarrie, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry, *Hab. 2. 3.* The more importing of experiments of love we are, to the glorie of Christ; the more still will Christ graciously give us to our further comfort. And this indeed is Gods end in comforting some of his

D 5

children,

children, *that they may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted of God:* as the Apostle sweetly affirms.

Thirdly, thank Christ humbly and heartily for his coming to thee; if thou wouldst have him abide still with thee. The Israelites when they came into the promised land which flowed with milk and honey, they were to take the first of all the fruits of the earth, and put them in a basket, and so present them to the Priest, saying, *viz. And now behold, I have brought the first fruits of the land, which thou the Lord hast given me*, Deut. 26. Thus were they to set their first fruits before the Lord, and to worship before him, as you may see at large. Why you that enjoy Christ as a comforter, you have received the first fruits of that good land which *Canaan* typified, which flows with milk and honey. Bring therefore these first fruits, and set them before God, and worship: bring the sweet comforts of the holy Ghost in your hearts, before the Lord, and say, Behold, O Christ, these and these are the sweet consolations of thy Spirit: and so for them all I humbly render praise to thy Name. Such mightie enemies of my

peace

peace hast thou conquered : such doubts which so long troubled me, hast thou answered : such wants which so long time kept me exceeding low, hast thou supplied, to thee, O God, be the glorie of thine own goodnesse.

You have great cause thus to magnifie the Lord for his mercy, which find Christ as a comforter come to you. You enjoy that blessing which exceedeth all outward blessings. The light of Gods countenance lifted up. upon a poore mourning soul, it is of farre greater value then corn, wine, oyl ; then Corral, Rubies, or any choice thing that this world can afford. The naked revelation of Christ in the soul of man is of more worth then all these, saith *Solomon* : the most glorious revelation of Christ then to the soul, which the soul of man is capable of in this life, must needs be of much more transcendent worth. You enjoy that blessing which exceedeth many inward blessings. It exceedeth knowledge : for what is knowledge in the head, to the joy of the holy Ghost in the heart ? One beam of light in the understanding, is of more worth then all the Silver and Gold, Gems, and Jewels in the world, and yet one beam

beam of the light of Gods countenance shining upon the heart, though but by reflexion from the face of Jesus Christ, is of more worth then all knowledge which humane studie can attain unto. I cannot say that this blessing exceedeth the least saving grace in the soul: but this I can safely say, that consolation, it is the glosse and glory of every grace: every grace shines in its full lustre, where the Comforter dwells. This I can further say, that you enjoy that blessing which makes Heaven a Heaven, and which makes Earth a Heaven to you: and therefore you have great reason to magnifie the Lord for his mercy. The more of Heaven we enjoy upon Earth, the more should we set our selves to do the work of them which are in Heaven whilst on Earth.

Fourthly, finally let Christs mediate coming to thee by his Spirit, make thee long earnestly for his immediate coming: to thee in his own person: this delights Christ, that his spouse should say, *Come*, Revelation 22. 17. as the Spirit doth; That she should long for the wedding day, as he doth. When good old *Samson* had embraced the Consolation of *Israel*, for which he so long waited, he then desired presently to be dissolved

solved: so thou that hast imbraced the consolation of *Israel*. Shouldst in holy manner with *Siméon Job*, and *Paul*, desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all. You whom Christ hath kissed with the kisses of his lips, should long earnestly to lie between his breasts all night; my meaning is, to have a full enjoyment of Christ. Thus have I done speaking to such, who can tell me that Christ as a Comforter is come to them.

In the next place I addresse my self to speak to such of the godly, who can tell me that they never yet found Christ as a Comforter come to them. Two or three things I have to say to you from this sweet doctrine. First, I would have you to labour to believe this doctrine, that *Christ will not leave you comfortlesse, but will certainly (at last) come to you*. Christ hath repeated his promise. which is as a bond with many seals; and therefore thou hast just ground to believe, O comfortlesse Soule! that *Christ will not leave thee comfortlesse, but will come to thee*.

*Object.* What just ground have I to believe, that Christ will come to me, seeing he is holy, and I am unholy: he is glorious  
in

in holinesse, and I am abominable in sinne and wickednesse, faith the weak comfortlesse soul.

*Sol.* Art thou more vile then *Manasseh*? Christ came to him and comforted him. Art thou more muddy and earthly then *Zachew*? Christ came to him and comforted him. Art thou more devilish then *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom were cast seven devils? Christ came to her, and filled her soul with strong consolation Why shouldst not thou believe, that Christ will come to thee too, and quiet and comfort thy mourning spirit?

*Sol.* But secondly, I answer thus: *viz.* Christ doth not so much look how thou art qualified, as at what he hath promised: Christ hath promised he will come to thee, and he is faithfull and will do it. If thy soul were never so poore, never so blind, never so wretched, never so naked; yet Christ having promised to come to thee, he will make good his word, though he coue backward, with a mantle to cover thy nakednesse, as *Shem* and *Japhet* did to *Noah*. If thy soul were full of wounds, if thy soul were full of running purifying sores, if thou wert as black with sin as an *Ethiopian*; if thou wert

as spotted with sinne as a Leopard; nay, if thy soul did sink within thee, as *Lazarus* after taken out of the earth again; yet Christ having promised to come to thee and comfort thee, he will do it; though he hold his nose while he be comforting thy sinking nasie soul. Heaven and earth shall passe away, but not a jot or tittle of Christs promise shall fail. *The voice of my Beloved, behold he cometh leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills.* Cant. 2.8. Though there be mountains and hills of sinne in thy soul, yet Christ will come skipping over all these with comfort to thy soul, rather then thou shalt be left comfortlesse.

Wherefore, O weak, comfortlesse soul! say not of thy Saviour and comforter, as *Balaam* did, *I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh,* Num. 24.17. I shall see Christ come with a witnesse: nay with many thousand witnessses at the great day, when *every eye shall see him*; but I shall not see him come to me now, in this soul-dolour, as a comforter. I shall behold him per-adventure, as *Moses* beheld the Holy Land, as farre off: he will never come nigh my poore soul to stay it with those comforts which it needs: Cease, O weak soul, this  
more

more incredulous language; and strive to believe, and this sweet promise I treat of shall be made good unto thee. No sinne so mighty to keep thy Comforter from thee as unbelief. Say then, O mourning Christian, to thy comfortesse soul; *Yet a little while, and he that shal come will come, and will not tarry.* Heb. 10. 37. He that hath said he will come as a Comforter to thee, will come and will satisfie thy soul with consolation, as with marrow and farnesse. Say to thy sad soul, with the Psalmist: *My God will come, and will not keep silence*; he will speak consolation so plainly, that my ignorant soul shall understand; so powerfully, that my incredulous soul shall believe, and own her own mercies. Thou art now tossed and almost drowned. O my soul, with restlesse waves of miserie; but the Spirit will move upon these waters; thou shalt see Christ coming towards thee, upon these troublesome waves anon, and say, *Be not afraid, it is I*: I that have loved thee, and given my self for thee, and none shall pluck thee out of my hand.

Secondly, as I would have thee to strive firmly to believe this truth; so I would have thee endeavour patiently to wait the accomplishment

complishment of it. Believe that Christ will come to thee, and wait patiently until he do come. There is good ground why every soul should patiently wait for Christ coming to him, whether we consider our selves which are to be visited, or Christ our visitour. If thou O comfortlesse soul consider thy self which art to be visited; there is great reason thou shouldest wait patiently till Christ come to thee, how long soever he stay.

First, thou art a creature, and Christ is thy creatour; and should not a creature wait on his creatour? Thou art a servant, and Christ is thy Lord: and should not a servant wait on his Lord? Consider thee in thy highest relations, and they all call for waiting. Thou art a sonne, and Christ is thy father: and should not a sonne wait on his father? Thou art a wife, and Christ is thy husband: and should not a wife wait on her husband?

Secondly, consider that thou hast desired that Christ should never come to thee, and yet for all this, seeing he will come to thee, hast not thou just cause to wait patiently till he do come, how long soever it be first? Before thy calling thou didst reject

Christ.

Christ; and since thy calling, thou hast often grieved Christ; and hast not thou then deserved that Christ should never come to thee? Thou hast quenched many a sweet motion of the spirit of Christ: thou hast turned the deaf eare to the sweet still voice that hath spoken behind thee times without number, and so slighted the spirit of Christ; and hast not thou then justly deserved, that Christ as a comforter should never come to thee? yet seeing he will come for all this unkindnesse, hast not thou just cause to wait patiently for him, how long soever he stay? Thou hast many weeks, many moneths, nay many years gone along in a course of grieving Christ; and dost thou think much of waiting a few weeks, a few moneths, a few years, for Christ to come to comfort thee?

Take this in another form: Thou didst make Christ wait a long time upon thee, ere thou wouldst let him abide with thee as a spirit of Reformation: and is there not just cause then that thou shouldst wait patiently a long time upon him, if he will have it so, ere he abide with thee as a spirit of consolation? how many knocks did Christ give at thy stubborn heart, ere thou wouldst

open to him? how much dew of the night distilled upon his locks, ere thou wouldst give him house room in thy heart? how many mercies? how many corrections were all spilt upon thee, ere Christ could winne thee to respect him? canst thou tell? if thou canst not, think not much, if Christ make thee shed a few tears, and breath out a few groans, ere he bring glad tidings of peace unto thee.

Secondly, if thou consider Christ thy vi-  
sitor, there is all the reason that can be, that thou shouldst wait patiently till he come to thee. Christ will certainly come to thee: Christ will come to thee at the fittest time: Christ will come richly when he doth come; which are all speciall grounds of patience. Christ will come to thee, O comfortlesse soul! though it may seem to thee something long first. Thou doest not wait for one that will not come at all, as the *Turk* waiteth for *Mahomet*: nay, thou doest not wait for one that will frivolously delay the time of his coming. Thou doest not wait for one that will deceive thee. Christ hath promised to come to thee, and he is faithfull, and cannot deny himself. There are two things in faithfulness: first, that a man should own  
what

what he hath said; and then secondly, that he should make it good. Now both these will Christ do: Christ will not eat his words, as we say: what he hath promised he will confesse, and will make good; whatsoever labour or losse he be at to do it. Christ is not mutable as we are, to promise one thing to day, and recall it again to morrow: *he is immutable and changeth not, therefore we are not consumed.*

Thou dost not wait for one that will frivolumously delay the time of his coming. Christ will not deal with thy comfortlesse soul, as those sorry guests dealt with Christ, make excuses: one had bought a yoke of Oxen, and therefore could not come: another a Farm, &c. Christ will not tell thee, as *Abraham* did *Dives* in hell, between thy soul and him is a great gulf, so that there can be no entercourse between them: Nor that from heaven to earth, is too long a journey for him to make: He will not tell thee, that the place where thy sick comfortlesse soul lies, is filthy, and altogether unfit for him to come to: He will not tell thee that thy soul is so farre gone in grief and desperate sorrow, that it is in vain for him to come to thee. Christ puts none

of these delays upon any of his patients.

No, the ground, why Christ stays is, that he may come at the fittest time; and then he will come with healing in his wings, if all the devile in hell should oppose him, which methinks should be a satisfactorie ground of patience, to any disconsolate soul. If a Physician yet apply this and that further evacuation, rather then cordials, as knowing the body not yet fit for cordials, will not any wise main- submit patiently to his way? so if Christ forbear giving thy sick soul cordials, as he that well knows thy soul not fit yet for such luscious things, wilt not thou with much thankfullnelle acknowledge his great care over thy soul, and with all patience wait his leisure? I patiently undergo the pain of drawing plaisters, when I know my sore is not fit for healing; thus should it be in spirituall distresses; we should patiently undergo grief and sorrow, untill our souls be fit for consolation, and then we shall be sure to have it.

Finally, be sure of this, O mourning soul! that Christ will come richly, when he doth come; and therefore me thinks thou shouldst waite patiently for him: What Merchant but would

would wait patiently. the return of his ship in the longest voyage. if he were sure that it would richly return at last. Christ will come very richly furnished, with the comforts of the holy Ghost, which are unspeakable and glorious, to your souls that mourn after him, and wait for him. What the Apostle once spake of himself in relation to the *Romanes*; that may I truly say of Christ, in relation to all that mourn after him: *And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come* (saith he) *in the fulnesse of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ*, Rom. 15. 29. Christ I am sure, O mourning soul! when he doth come unto thee, he will come in the fulnesse of the blessing of the holy Ghost: thou shalt have joy in the holy Ghost unspeakable and glorious. Thou by long waiting art made a more vast vessel, to hold the precious waters of consolation; and Christ by long staying, doth (as I may say) the more furnish himself with these waters of life, to refresh, fill, and satisfie thy thirstie soul, when he comes to thee. Christ will heal thoroughly thy broken heart, and bind up all thy wounds: he will answer all thy doubts, and clear all thy scruples: he will quiet thy quarrelling conscience, and still thy com-

plaining

plaining spirit : he will fill thy sad soul with joy and gladnesse, and thy dejected spirit with songs of thanksgiving.

If these things, O mourning soul ! will not make thee wait patiently, till thy Comforter come to thee, but thou wilt murmur and repine, and fall upon indirect wayes to get consolation; know, that by this practise, thou wilt make thy condition more miserable then at present it is, Thou wilt greive him that should come as a Comforter to thee : and if thou by sin make Christ grieve; how can Christ by his Spirit make thee rejoyce ? and if thou set him a mourning that can onely comfort thee; by whom wilt thou be comforted ? Dost thou think to winne Christ to thee, by a dogged disposition ? Christ may pitty, and cure thy humours, but e'will never be by consolation. He will bring thee to be lowly and meek ere thou shalt find rest to thy soul : he will make thee willing to lie under his feet, glad of crums of comfort, and willing to wait for them till Christ hath dined, and every child served.

If thy corrupt soul hanker after the pleasure of sin again, because Christ as a Comforter doth not come to thee, and thou be  
resolved

resolved to pick and choose amongst the sins thy soul knows, to find out one that thy soul most loves, to make a comforter to thee: as the *Israelites* in their dogged humour made them a captain to return to *Egypt* again; know this, that what sin thou pitch-est upon to make a comforter, that sin will Christ make a devil to torture thee: Christ will make thee know by wotull experience, that the sweetest sin is a bitter and miserable comforter: that the least sinne is too great an evil truly to comfort the soul: that to go to the devil for consolation, is to make faster haste for comfort, then good speed: that neither sin, nor any thing in the world beside sin shall comfort thy soul; when he himself will not.

3. The last instruction that I have to commend to thee, O comfortlesse soul! that didst never yet find Christ as a comforter come to thee, is this: Observe how Christ comes, and do not put him off. Christ comes to comfortlesse souls with comfort, in a promise; as I have at large shewed you. The promise, Christ opens before the soul, that he may see the blessing wrapt up in it, which he needs: and then often repeats it to the soul, that he may relie upon it: instances to

illustrate

illustrate this way of Christ, I have given you, things must not be here again repeated. That which here I would presse by way of application, is, that you which are comfortlesse souls, would observe this secret way of the comforter, and meet him. Art thou tempted? and dost thou now hear a sweet still voice, as it were behind thee, saying, *My grace shall be sufficient for thee?* Why this is the voyce of thy Beloved that is come to thee, embrace what he saith, rest upon it, turn not thy Comforter away now, by unbelief and peivish pettish humours. Hast thou fallen into sinne by the strength of temptation, and thine own corruption? and dost thou hear such a sweet voyce behind thee as this, *The blond of Jesus Christ cleanseeth us from all sinne?* 1. Joh. 1.7. Why this is the language of thy beloved, he is come to comfort thee, O mourning soul, do not thrust him away by unkind language of unbelief and passion, Hear what he saith, for it is sweet: strive to believe what he saith, for it is sure. As *Isaac* said unto *Jacob* his sonne, after he had had some discourse at a distance with him, *Come*

'Tis with many Christians in their minority, as it was with *Samuel*, they do not know the voice of the Lord, speaking in a promise, and therefore I thought good to note this last instruction.

*E* some discourse at a distance with him, *Come*

*near now and kisse me my sonne,* Gen. 37. 26. so should such comfortlesse souls say to Christ, when they heare Christ speaking as it were at a distance, softly and coldly to them, the sweet and melodious promises of his word; come near now, O my beloved, and kisse me with these kisses of thy lips, for thy love is better then wine: what thou sayest to my soul, say it with such life, that my heart may no longer be faithlesse, but believe, and give glory to thee. I have now done speaking to you, who never yet had the Comforter come to you.

I come now in the last place to speak a word or two particularly, to such of Gods people, who can tell me that they have found Christ as a Comforter come to them, but now have lost him. Three things I have to say to these: First, labour to be sensible of thy losse. Secondly, blame not Christ for departing from thee. Thirdly, use all holy means to get him to return to thee again. First, I would have thee, O deserted soul, to labour to be truly sensible of thy losse. Though it be that some are deeply sensible of this great losse; yet others are as deeply stupid, which moves me to note this instruction. For a man to be stupid and sense-

lesse

lesse under corporall afflictions; argues a very ill temper of spirit; but for a man to be stupid and senselesse under spirituall afflictions, under such a spirituall affliction as this, the losse of the Sunne, the losse of Christ as a Comforter, argues a very ill temper of spirit indeed. Strive therefore, O deserted stupid soul! to affect thine heart thoroughly with thy losse. Thou hast lost more then *Job*, when he had lost children, substance, health, honours, and friends: nay thou hast lost more then if thou hadst lost this world; nay, thou hast lost more then if thou hadst lost thy life, which is of more worth then the world; thou hast lost Christ, which is richer then this world, and sweeter then thy life. What an infinite losse were it to this world to loose the sunne? 'twere at once to loose all; *Perente sole, perent omnia*; for all things servicable for the use of man depend upon the motion and influence of that glorious body. What a losse then is it to the lesser world, to loose Christ the Sunne of Righteousnesse? 'Tis to loose all good at once, for soul and body. All Graces close and wither when Christ departs, as all fragrant flowers when the sunne withdraws his influence. And when these flowers wi-

ther in the soul, a man is a moving dung-hill, that stinks in the nostrils of God and man, where ever he comes. A man that hath lost Christ may truly say as she when the Ark was lost, *that his glory is departed.* As the Sunne is the glory of the greater World, so Christ the Sunne of Righteousnesse, is the glory of the lesser World, to wit, man.

Thou hast lost that in the world, that is more worth then the world, and which all the world can never help thee to. Thou hast lost that which would have made the worst condition in this life, a heaven; whereas the best without it, is but a hell. Thou hast lost that which would have been to thy soul a continuall feast; whereas now thy soul is in a continuall famine and leanness. Thou hast lost thy spirits, and thy soul is in a dead palsey, so that thou art a living dead man, fit for no spirituall service. Thou hast lost thy head, thou hast lost thy eyes, thou hast lost thy hands, thou hast lost thy clothing; nay, thou hast lost thy best father thy best husband, thy best friend; all this and much more comfort is Christ to man. Thou hast great reason then, O deserted soul, to lay to heart thy losse.

Lay

Lay to heart thy losse, this is comely, but do not blame Christ for departing from thee, this is uncomely, and unrighteous. Uncomely, for it doth not suit with widdomes children, to lay folly to their Maker. Unrighteous, for thou constrainst him to depart from thee, otherwise he had never left thee: thou didst sinne again and again of weaknesse, and yet Christ as a Comforter did not depart from thee, untill thou beganst to take *pleasure in unrighteousnesse*, and to make sinne a custome, *a right eye* a very serviceable thing unto thee, Christ did not leave thee. Thou beganst to wax wanton against Christ, and then Christ cast thee off. Thou beganst to play the Apostate, and to backslide in heart from Christ, and so didst fall off from Christ; and then he he fell off from thee, *and filled thee with thine own wyes*. Now these things seriously considered, hast thou any cause to blame CHRIST for departing from thee? It is a comely and a very righteous thing for Widdomes children to justifie widdome in all his wayes, as to others, so to our selves. Wherefore thus do, O deserted soul; say, Righteous art thou, O Christ, in departing from me, and righteous maist

thou be, if thou never return to me, so unkindly have I dealt with thee.

Then set thy self seriously to the use of all holy means, whereby thou maist get thy Comforter to return to thee. Examine thy soul thoroughly thou must, to find out what evil, deprived thee of so great a good; and in serious soul-searching, God will speak to thy conscience, and conscience will speak plainly to thee, and tell thee wherein thou didst give distaste to thy Comforter, and what was the cause he forsook thy soul.

And when thou hast found out that evil, which conscience rels thee, deprived thee of so great a good, thou must fall very foul with it, how sweet soever it hath been unto thee. Thy great work must be, to bring thy heart to a holy *revenge* upon this sinne: to abhorre it, and thy self because of it: and to become very vile, as *Job* saith, and very low in thine own eyes. Bring thy heart to admire the infinite patience and mercie of God, that things are no worse with thy soul. That God had not cut thee off, in the acting of that sin for which he deserted thee: that he hath left any place for repentance, and given the least desire to set about this work. And when thou art come thus far; possibly

the

the light of Gods countenance may begin now and then, to glance into thy soul, as at some little cranny : or at least some more then ordinary lightsomeneſſe may appear in thy dark dull ſoul, as there doth in the dark morning, ſome ſpace of time before the ſunne appears, that had left this Horizon. Now this beam of light, or this little lightſomeneſſe of ſoul, thou muſt much admire ; and acknowledge an unfathorned depth of love in it ; that God ſhould ſo much as once ſtoop, to caſt an eye after thee more, to give thy ſoul the leaſt reſreſhing, that did abuſe ſtagons of love.

By this glimpe of light, or glimmering light, you are to ſtrengthen your faith, in the belief of this; that light will more and more appear, as the light of the morning unto the perfect day: and ſo conſequently to follow God with ſo much the more fervencie of prayer, for the return of his *wonted kindneſſe*. *Joſeph*, you know carried himſelf very roughly to his brethren which had abuſed him, for ſome ſpace of time; and put them in great fear of the loſſe of their lives; told them they were *Spies*, and many harſh words he gave them, and harſh looks: but at laſt when his brethren had brought *Benjamin* to him, and

coursed a while, *Josephs* bowels began to work, and he could no longer with-hold his brotherly love; *Come near to me, I pray you, I am Joseph your brother, &c.* Thus Christ our elder Brother deals with us, who do unkindly and unbrotherly use him: he will handle us very roughly, and put us in fear of the losse of our best lives: he will make our consciences speak bitter things against us; and let loose the devil to tell us that we are *Spies* hyprocrites and false friends to Christ: in this distracted, affrighted, perplexed state, he may hold us many dayes, many weeks, many moneths; but he cannot hold in his brotherly love alwayes, if we patiently bear his frowns, and kindly intreat him, and bring *Benjamin* to him, his own blond and merits; this will make his bowels work; and make him unmask himself and say, *Come near to me* O mourning souls, tossed and not comforted; I am Christ your elder Brother, whom ye unkindly used: in a little wrath I hid my face from you, but now with everlasting kindnesse will I embrace you.

*Trinmi Deo gloria.*

*F I N I S.*

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥  
 ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ॥ श्रीकृष्णाय नमः ॥

# CHRISTS COMMUNION with His Church Militant.

2. TIM. 4. verse 22.

*The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.*

**I**HIS Text is *Pauls* sweet affectionate farewell to *Timothie*. Many grave and gracious instructions *Paul* had given *Timothie*; but 'tis not much what man saith to the care, as what Christ saith to the heart that works effectually, to set man about his dutie; and therefore doth *Paul* in the conclusion of all his Christian counsell to *Timothy* pathetically pray, *That the Lord Jesus Christ would be with his Spirit.*

The best reaching of man, is but as water spilt on the ground unlesse Christ inwardly reach the spirit. If I am taught my duty by a

E 5

*Paul,*

*Paul*, one in gifts not inferiour to the chiefeſt Apoſtles, yet unleſſe Chriſt be with my ſpirit, to make things take root there, all will die and wither; like good ſeed caſt into bad ground. And therefore *Paul* ſaw it but needfull, as to reach the care, ſo to intreat the Lord to reach and ſtrengthen the ſpirit: *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with thy ſpirit.*

There is a great diſtance (you know) between the care and the heart: it is an eaſie thing for man to bring home things unto the one, but no leſſe then the almighty power of Chriſt will bring home things unto the other. There is an incomparable hardneſſe upon the heart of man naturally: it is harder then an *Adamant*: now though a child with his little finger, may make a dint upon dough, yet a Giant with all his ſtrength cannot make dints upon an *Adamant*, much leſſe can all created ſtrength, make divine impreſſions upon the ſpirit of man; and therefore it is, that *Paul* doth implore an Almighty ſtrength to do thus, *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with thy ſpirit.*

Why doth not *Paul* here, with riches and honours and pleaſures unto *Timothie*? Is the bare preſence of Chriſt with a mans ſpirit ſuch a bleſſing? To this I anſwer, riches and honours,

honours, &c. They are *bona* but not *optima*: good things, but not the best things. Earthly things though good in themselves, yet are no further forth good to me, then as the Lord Jesus Christ is with my spirit, to guide it to use them; and therefore *Paul* as one truly wise, prayed for the prime good for *Timothy*; for that good which makes all other things work together for good, to wit, *That to have the Lord Jesus Christ with our spirits, is a prime & principall blessing.* *Paul* here wisheth it to *Timothy*, as a cardinall blessing, *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.*

*Enucleatio propositionis.*

*To have Christ with our spirits, &c.* How can Christ be present with man upon earth, who is now ascended, and sitteth at the right hand of his Father in heaven?

The Apostle doth hint an answer to this question, in the form of his prayer, if you observe it. *The Lord Jesus Christ* saith he, *be with thy spirit.* He speaks of such a presence, as will fitly yield communion and fellowship to the spirit of man. There is a double presence of Christ with man, corporall and spirituall joyntly; or merely spirituall. With just men made perfect in glorie, Christ is corporally present; they behold his wounded

*Paul*, one in gifts not inferiour to the chiefeſt Apoſtles, yet unleſſe Chriſt be with my ſpirit, to make things take root there, all will die and wither; like good ſeed caſt into bad ground. And therefore *Paul* ſaw it but needfull, as to reach the care, ſo to intreat the Lord to reach and ſtrengthen the ſpirit: *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with thy ſpirit.*

There is a great diſtance (you know) between the care and the heart: it is an eaſie thing for man to bring home things unto the one, but no leſſe then the almighty power of Chriſt will bring home things unto the other. There is an incomparable hardneſſe upon the heart of man naturally: it is harder then an *Adamant*: now though a child with his little finger, may make a dint upon dough, yet a Giant with all his ſtrength cannot make dints upon an *Adamant*; much leſſe can all created ſtrength, make divine impreſſions upon the ſpirit of man; and therefore it is, that *Paul* doth implore an Almighty ſtrength to do thus, *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with thy ſpirit.*

Why doth not *Paul* here, wiſh riches and honours and pleaſures unto *Timothie*? Is the bare preſence of Chriſt with a mans ſpirit ſuch a bleſſing? To this I anſwer, riches and honours,

honours, &c. They are *bona* but not *optima*: good things, but not the best things. Earthly things though good in themselves, yet are no further forth good to me, then as the Lord Jesus Christ is with my spirit, to guide it to use them; and therefore *Paul* as one truly wise, prayed for the prime good for *Timothy*; for that good which makes all other things work together for good, to wit, *That to have the Lord Jesus Christ with our spirits, is a prime & principall blessing*. *Paul* here wisheth it to *Timothy*, as a cardinall blessing, *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit*.

*Enucleatio propositionis.*

*To have Christ with our spirits, &c.* How can Christ be present with man upon earth, who is now ascended, and sitteth at the right hand of his Father in heaven?

The Apostle doth hint an answer to this question, in the form of his prayer, if you observe it. *The Lord Jesus Christ* saith he, *be with thy spirit*. He speaks of such a presence, as will fitly yield communion and fellowship to the spirit of man. There is a double presence of Christ with man, corporall and spirituall joyntly; or merely spirituall: With just men made perfect in glorie, Christ is corporally present; they behold his wounded

wounded body made a glorious bodie, as a continuall assurance of the Resurrection of their own vile bodies, unto the same similitude. And with them Christ is present, spiritually filling them with those joyes, the taste of which upon earth is called *unspeakable and full of glorie*. Of this communion speaks Christ himself, *I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one*, Joh. 17. 23. As the soul is *totam in toto*, & *tota in qualibet parte*: according to the whole in that whole which is lesse noble then it self; according to the whole, that is, according to that full force and energie which the soul hath, it actuates and organizeth every member of the body, the least as well as the greatest; so Christ in the mysticall body of saints glorified, is as I may say, *Totus in toto*, & *totus in qualibet parte*. Whole Christ doth wholly exercise dominion in every glorified soul; hence it is, that all such souls are wholly holy, and wholly happy, that is perfectly holy, and perfectly happy: for as much as Christ, who is in the fulnesse of his Fathers glorie is fully present with them.

Secondly, there is a presence of Christ with man, merely spiritually; that is, such a presence; as whereby not the person, but the

provi-

providence of Christ may be seen, such a presence as *superiora* have with *inferiora*, not a *contiguall*, but a *virtuall* presence; a presence of influence and governance, as the sunne hath with us by his rayes and beams. And this presence is either *Common* or *Speciall*.

The common presence of Christ with man, is that whereby man is upheld and guided, according to the being of a rationall creature. Of this presence of Christ with man, speaks the Apostle, *that they should seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him and find him; though he be not far from every one of us, for in him we live, move, and have our being.* Acts 17. 27. 28. Christ as an upholder of each creature, is not farre from every one of us, that is, he is still present with us thus, and *with all Nations of men, which he hath made of one blood, to dwell upon the face of the earth.* This presence of Christ with man therefore cannot properly be called a *prime* and *principall blessing*, a choice and favour, because it is common to mankind in generall; yea common to all creatures below man: for God is with all the works of his hands, to uphold every creature according to its proper species.

Secondly,

Secondly, there is a speciall presence of Christ with man which is that efficacious working of the Spirit of Christ, in the spirit of man, whereby it is made one spirit with the Spirit of Christ, in willing and nilling, according to that of the Apostle, *He that is joyued to the Lord is one spirit.*

There is a speciall presence of Christ, with the bodies of men, for the good of them; which the *Psalmist* intimates where he saith, *That he knows our frame, & remembers that we are but dust: and that the Angels of the Lord pitch their tents about the righteous.* And *Jacob* found the truth of this by experience, when he fled before *Esan*, and slept so sweetly upon a stone. But this tender and speciall presence and providence of Christ, respecting the outward man, is comprehended under the other, which respects the inward man, as *quid minus sub majori*, a lesse blessing under a greater. For if God be in a speciall manner present with my spirit, to guide and order that unto all holy wayes, my spirit will command my bodie to walk in them too: and so consequently Christ cannot choose but be tenderly present with me also, for the good of that, whilst every member thereof is actuated

actuated by a spirit of his own ordering, to his own honour, *as weapons of righteousness.* And therefore doth *Paul* (pithily to speak much in few) silently passe over that which is necessarily presupposed; praying that Christ would be with *Timothies* spirit, and then he was sure Christ would be after a speciall manner present with his bodie too, for the good of that. *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.* That is, *the Lord Jesus Christ exercise a speciall dominion in thy spirit, for the guiding and ordering of it, unto the avoiding of evil, and to the performing of all good, whereby Christ may have all the glorie due to his name.*

Now that thus to have Christ present with a mans spirit, is a prime and principall blessing, I will plainly demonstrate to you by a triple argument *ab effectu.*

Thus to have Christ present with our spirits, is the ready way to all temporall, spirituall, and eternall good; and therefore must needs be a prime and principall blessing.

Thus to have Christ present with a mans spirit, is the ready way unto all temporall good. Men whose spirits Christ doth after a speciall manner order, to avoid sinne, and

to keep themselves pure, as *Paul* here useth the expression to *Timothie*, all temporall good things, so farre forth as may be good for them, belong unto them by promise: For godlinesse hath the promise of this life. *It shall come to passe* (saith the Lord) *If you walk in my wayes, that I will blesse you in the fruit of the wombe, in the fruit of the field, in the basket and store, &c. If you walk in my wayes I will do this, &c.* Why, they with whose spirits Christ is, after a speciall manner present, this is their *highway* (as *Solomon* saith) *to depart from evil*: that is, this is their dayly endeavour, to walk in all the wayes of the Lord, and so consequently all temporall good of right belongs unto them.

But you will say, How is it then, that those with whose spirits Christ is most present to make most tender for his honour, have usually least of all temporall good things.

To this the answer is easie and manifold. Men with whose spirits Christ is most present, to make them most tender to avoid sinne, and to keep themselves pure; these the devil doth most of all maligne, and sets his limbs to *spoil them of their goods*; as the

Authour to the *Hebrews* saith, to keep them from that which Christ would have them advanced to; or else to strip them of that which Christ hath conferred on them, by imprisonment, banishment, and the like; and so make such live in dens and holes, and caves of the earth; to wander in Deserts and Wildernesses, wearing sheep-skinnes, and goat-skinnes, whom the world is not worthy of. Where a spirit of malice and confusion rules, 'tis no marvell to see servants set on horse-back, and Princes go on foot.

Secondly, men with whose spirit Christ is after a speciall manner present, he takes speciall notice to what evil the spirit is most enclined, and so answerably gives of these outward things unto them. A wise Father hath his eye upon the disposition of his child, and to what exorbitancie he finds him enclined, he labours to prevent all occasions to it, and so keeps his child short of what he could otherwise liberally allow him. And thus 'tis with our heavenly Father, respecting his children; he eyes strictly their spirits, and if he see them inclined to pride, coverousnesse, or any other scandalous vice, he shortens them in that which may foment these. At this (I think) *Jamies*

may

may point, where he saith, *Let the rich rejoyce in that he is made low*, Jam. 1. 10. God out of tender love to his children, oft times makes them poore in purse, that they may become poore in spirit, and so capable of the kingdome of heaven. Which rightly weighed, is not matter of sorrow, but matter of joy, as *James* saith.

Thirdly, those with whose spirits Christ is after a speciall manner present, to guide them to walk in his wayes, and to keep themselves pure; Christ doth prove them by poverie, as by other things: and hence it may come to passe; that Christians very holy, may yet notwithstanding be very destitute of the things of this life. Thus you know the Lord dealt with *Job*. Christ was after a speciall manner present with his Spirit, to guide him to walk uprightly above many in his time. Now to make known this to the world, to his own glory, and *Jobs* eternall honour, he stript *Job* of all, and set him upon a dunghill, who before sat with the chiefest in seats of honour. God will have the world know, that those with whose spirits he is after a speciall manner present, to guide and order them, are not as those with whose spirits the devil is in a speciall

speciall manner present, to guide and order; to wit, such as will wind and turn every way when put to it.

Lastly, those with whose spirits Christ is after a speciall manner present, they desire but little of the things of this life; and therefore 'tis no marvell, to see Christians very holy, yet not very wealthy. Christians with whose spirit Christ is after a speciall manner present, they only desire daily bread; *Agnes* portion, food convenient; and this the Lord gives them, and with this they are contented, which is the only wealthy estate. Christians, with whose spirits Christ is after a speciall manner present, *they hunger and thirst after righteousness*, not after riches in the world: they *cover the best gifts*, the unsearchable riches of Christ, and not the fading riches of this life. Now Christ applies himself to be most liberall in the distribution of that, which the spirits of men most bend after; in mercy, or in justice. Christians whose spirits most strongly bend after grace; to these Christ in mercie doth most bountifully apply himself, to give grace; according to that of Christ, *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled*. Christians whose spirits most

most strongly bend after worldly riches, to these oft times Christ in justice most liberally applies himself to give those, according to that of the Psalmist, *whose belly thou fillest with thy bid treasure*: according likewise to that of Solomon, *There is a sore evil which I have seen under the Sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt*, P<sup>sal.</sup> 17. 11. Ecc<sup>les.</sup> 5. 13. The objection being thus answered, the argument is still of force: That to have Christ with our spirits, is the way to all temporall good, and so consequently, *a prime and principall blessing*.

But that I may yet more fully speak in this argument, note that temporall good, is either positive, or privative; (if I may for illustrations sake so distinguish.) Temporall good in a positive sense, is that secular thing which is in it self good; as bread, and cloathing, and the like, of which we have already spoken.

Temporall good privatively so called, is affliction ordered to a mans good, which in it self is not so. Now all those with whose spirits Christ is present, are partakers of this temporall good. All ourward crosses tend to their inward gain, because Christ is with their spirits. For all ourward troubles are

heavier

heavier or lighter, more hurtfull or more profitable still to a man, as Christ is pleased to order his Spirit under them. A little outward trouble, if Christ let it seize upon a mans spirit, he quickly sinks and dies under his burden, according to that of the Apostle, *worldly sorrow causeth death*. The losse of a wife or husband; nay, the losse of a child or friend; nay, the losse of the least outward content, if Christ stand aloof from a mans spirit, and let it fasten upon him, he will soon languish, and bleed inwardly to death; whereas all outward afflictions, meeting together upon the outward man, if Christ be with the spirit to support and bear up that, a Christian sweetly submits, and keeps on his way, according to that of the Apostle, *Rejoycing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer*, Rom. 12. 12. Now Christ tenderly watcheth when outward troubles begin to take hold of that spirit with whom he is specially present, and then he quickly relieves and easeth it; and not onely so, but sanctifies it to the drawing of such a spirit nearer to God in love, according to that of David, Psal. 116. 1. 2. *I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications, because he*  
*hath*

*batb inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.* Adde this to the former, that to have Christ with our spirits is the ready way to all temporal good, whether *positive* or *privative*; and you must needs grant it to be a principall blessing.

Secondly, those with whose spirits Christ is specially present, are in the ready way to all spirituall good: and therefore thus to have Christ present with our spirits, must needs be counted a principall blessing. Christ is the authour & worker of all grace; and therefore such spirits must needs be very gracious with whom Christ is. *The places are holy wherunto the Ark of the Lord batb come*, saith *Solomon*, 2. Chron. 8. 11. I may truly say it of Christ, which the Ark typified. The spirits are holy with whom Christ is, and where holy Christ cometh. They are at the well-head for holiness, who have holy Christ with their spirits.

They that have Christ with their spirits, are in the ready way to the very height of heavenly wisdom, as Christ is. With him are all the treasures of wisdom. He that lies in thy bosome, teaching thee wisdom secretly, came out of the very bosome of the Almighty, and knows all things; and

he

he gives such an unction to that spirit which he teaches, that he makes it know and discern all things too.

They that have Christ with their spirits, are in the ready way to the very height of love, which is the glory of all graces, in the sight of God and man; for there is no such worker and winner of love as Christ is. If he do but *put in his finger by the hole of the doore*, he will make a mans bowels melt after him. If he do but reveal his love to our spirits alittle; our spirits grow sick of love unto him. He will wound us with one of his eyes, so full of beauty is he. Let a mans spirit be never so cold, yet if Christ be with it, he is in the ready way to burn with love to Christ as strong as death, which many waters cannot quench.

They that have Christ with their spirits, are in the ready way to the very height of joy and consolation: they are in the ready way to joy *unspeakable and full of glory*. *These things have I spoken unto you, &c.* said Christ to his Disciples. Christ speaks such things to the spirits of those with whom he is present, as fills their spirits with joy to the very brim; and this oft times in the very depth of all outward extremity. The

Church

Church doth darkly hint this; *The Comforter which should relieve my soul is far from me*, Lam. 1. 16. As if the Church had said, Though my outward miserie be exceeding great, yet if the Comforter did but keep close to my spirit. I should have as much consolation as my heart could hold, in the midst of all my misery: but this is my misery, that the Comforter which should relieve my soul is far from me: out of the hearing of my sighs and grones; nay, out of the hearing of strong cries; *he is angry against my prayers*. In a word, a Christian which hath Christ with his spirit, is in the ready way to *excell in virtue*, as *David* sayes: to excell in all virtue, to be wiser then his teacher; more excellent in all grace then his neigbours. And therefore to have Christ present with our spirits, must needs be counted and called *A prime and principall blessing*.

Lastly, to have Christ with our spirits, is the ready way unto eternall good; and therefore a principall blessing. As a stone carries with it whatsoever light thing is fastened to it, unto its own center; so Christ whose proper place of residence is heaven, carries with him thither all such spirits as to whom he is united on earth. If we have

a speciall friend at Court, we count that we are in a ready way to see all the pomp of the Prince. Christ hath the keyes of Heaven and Hell; he opens and no man shuts; shuts, and no man can open: all with whose spirits he hath dwelt, and been kindly used upon earth, he knows; and when they shall knock at those everlasting gates, he will open and let them in to every room in his royall dwelling, and shew them all the glory which he had with his Father before the world was. 'Tis between Christ and that spirit with whom he lives, as between *Naomi* and *Ruth*; where the one lives the other will. Whilst such spirits live in the body, Christ will live with them there; when they remove out of the body, Christ will not leave them (*death cannot separate*) but commands his Angels to bring them to eternall mansions with himself. Christ which is lifted up to glorie himself, will draw up all such unto him, as in whose spirits he dwels, and no strength shall be able to withstand him; none shall pluck such out of his hand. *Unio cum Christo, est unio, inseparabilis.*

If so have Christ with our spirits, be a grand favour, not to have him with our spi-

F

rits

rits, must needs be a grand evill. A spirit without Christ is naked, as a body without cloaths. Many things may make cloathing and defence for the body, but onely Christ that *best garment*, as the Father of the Prodigall calls him, can make cloathing and munition for the soul. A mans spirit without Christ, is as a naked body amongst thorns, every thorn pierceth, and every bryar fetcheth, and fetcheth bloud from such a body; so worldly cares and worldly fears, when strong, will pierce such a naked spirit thorow and thorow, and make him runne mad, if God (unsought) do not seasonably step in and bridle the Bedlam. A mans spirit without Christ, is as a naked body amongst Serpents; every Serpent stings and venoms such a naked body to death; so evill seed of the Serpent stings, and poysons to death such naked souls, by their threatenings, flatteries, examples, and the like. A mans spirit without Christ, is as a naked body in great blasts of lightning; such bodies are suddenly scorcht and consumed; so such naked souls are suddenly blasted, by the fiery darts of the Devil, and so suddenly oftentimes go from burning to burning; from burning in sinne, to burning in Hell.

A mans spirit without Christ is not onely naked, but blind too. A naked man having his sight, may make some shift; but a man naked and blind too, is in a miserable helplese state indeed: and just such is the state and condition of every mans spirit that hath not Christ with it: for as the sunne in the Heavens is the eye and light of the greater world; so the Sun of righteousnesse Christ, is the eye and light of the lesser world, man. Now do but imagine what a dark dolorous condition we should all be in, if the Sunne were darkned, or had utterly forsaken our Horizon; or do but think of that darknesse which was upon the Egyptians for a little time, when no man could stirre out of his place; and such and much worse is the dark dolorous condition of a spirit without Christ, not able to see the least beam of saving light, not able to stirre a step out of his place, into the way that leads to life.

A mans spirit without Christ is not onely blind, but dumb too. A man that is blind, yet if he can speak, can begge for that which he cannot see to work for. But when a man is blind, and dumb too; that he can neither help himself, nor begge of others, he is in a dole-

full condition indeed ; and just such is the condition of every mans spirit that hath not Christ with it. For as Christ is eyes to the soul, so he is a mouth and tongue enabling to crie *Abba, Father*. Unless the spirit of Christ be with our spirits, helping our infirmities, who are godly ; we are dumb , and not able to speak to our own Father as adopted children for daily bread ; much more unable to beg for life, to the dreadful Judge of all the world , must all ungodly persons needs be, whose spirits are altogether without Christ as an helper. I would have all men that live in their sins think seriously of this ; When Christ as the dreadful Judge of all the world at the great day shall ask you what you have to say for your selves, that you should not eternally die for your finnes, in which you have lived ; you will be like that man which was without his wedding garment , dumb and not able to say a word for your selves, because Christ is not with your spirits. It is impossible that a mans own guiltie spirit should be able to look the terrible Judge of men and devils in the face, much lesse speak a word for mercie , unlesse the Almighty Spirit of Christ be with it, to aid it. Many ignorant wretches

wretches soothe themselves with this, that they will at last crie, Lord, Lord, and so prevail quickly for pardon with him who is infinite in mercie. Why, but think on this, O ignorant soul! *No man can call Jesus, Lord, but by the holy Ghost.* Thou wilt not in thy greatest need be able to crie Lord, Lord, unlesse the Lord be with thy spirit. Death will sting thee, conscience will gnaw thee, Christ will condemne thee, Devils will reare thee, and yet wilt not thou be able to crie, Lord, Lord have mercie on me, unlesse the Lord be with thy spirit: but instead of crying Lord, Lord, for mercie, thou wilt burn in malice against the Lord, and curse and blasphemie as Devils and damned wretches do. Hast thou never seene condemned wretches, not onely dumb, but with all desperate too; and leap off the ladder themselves, without either asking God or man forgiveness? thus in a spirituall sense, and much worse, wilt thou do in the great day of judgement, forasmuch as Christ is not with thy spirit.

Fourthly, a mans spirit without Christ is not onely blind and dumb, but deaf too. And if a man be blind and dumb, yet if he can heare, he may make some shift to help himself;

self: we follow a thing ( we know ) sometimes by the sound , when we cannot see it, nor speak what it is: but when a man is naked, blind, dumb, and deaf too , he is in a helpless condition indeed ; and just such is the state of a mans spirit without Christ. For Christ, as he is eyes and tongue, so he is ears also to the soul of man. Hence it is that *John* speaks so frequently of spirituall hearing, after a *Hypotheticall* manner: *He that hath an eare, &c.* That is, if any man have spirituall discerning, *Let him heare what the Spirit saith to the Churches.* Intimating that a spirituall eare is a very rare thing to be found, that which no man hath , but he which hath Christ with his spirit, that hath had his eares *bored* by the Spirit of Christ, as the Scripture speaks ; all others are as deaf as Adders , and cannot heare the voice of the Charmer , charm he never so wisely. I would have all that live in their sins seriously consider this too, as a further degree of unhappinesse. You tell us that you will turn from your sins hereafter, and obey the call of God in the Ministerie of his Word: but let me ask you this ; Have you not hitherto turned the deaf eare upon God ? Yes: I and so you will do for the time to come;

come; and the reason of both the same; because Christ is not with your spirits. Let mercies call, corrections call; let friends call, father call, mother call, husband call, wife call; let Ministers call, conscience call; nay, let Christ himself call in what voice he will, still voice, or lowd voice, in words never so pleasing, or never so piercing, yet wilt not thou heare, because Christ is not with thy spirit; but with *Solomons* fool, wilt on in thy sins, and be eternally punished.

Fifthly, a mans spirit without Christ is without *feeling*, in a dead pale all over, which how dolorous such a state is in a corporal sense, you know; much more dolorous in a spirituall sense, I am sure. As the spirit of man can neither see, speak, nor hear, so neither can it feel, without the Spirit of Christ. The spirit of man without the Spirit of Christ, is dead. Christ is to our spirits, as our spirits are unto our bodies, their life; and life is the principle of feeling: for the dead feel nothing. *When Christ which is our life shall appear*, &c. Where there is no Christ, there is no life; and where there is no life, there is no feeling. You know the Apostle speaks of some that were *past feeling*, having given themselves over to lascivi-

*ousnesse, to work all uncleannesse with greedinesse.* There the Apostle speaks of such a senselesse, as lies upon the soul by a second act of divine justice. All humane spirits by the first act of divine justice upon *Adam*, are naturally past feeling, and would give up themselves unto all wickednesse with greedinesse, did not God restrain. To be past feeling in this latter sense, notes principally a want of divine affection; when sinne doth not kindly affect the soul with sorrow; as in the former sense, when sinne doth not at all affect the soul with sorrow: when holy wayes and works do not kindly affect the soul with joy; as in the other sense, when they do not affect the soul with joy at all; but rather disturbe and provoke to passion and malice.

I would have all that live in their finnes, seriously think on this also, as a further degree of unhappinesse. You have heard many powerfull Sermons, which you have seen work admirably upon others, and yet they have made no impression upon your spirits; and many hundred more may you heare, & no divine impression at last be made; and the reason of both, one and the same; because Christ is not with your spirits; and by reason  
of

of this, your hearts are as Adamants which every stroke hardens, but not breaks it. Let the master smite, and the man smite; let God smite, and his Minister smite, and conscience smite; nay, let every member of the bodie be smitten with punishment, to affect the soul with sinne; yet will it not stirre and complain, unlesse Christ be with it.

Finally, a mans spirit without Christ, is without tasting or smelling; to these senses also (you know) the Scripture doth allude; and therefore fitly here may I, to set forth fully the unhappy condition of every spirit without Christ. You know the Apostle speaks of some, *that savoured not the things of God*; which is a term applied in Scripture to the sense of smelling, as well as to the sense of tasting; and therefore for brevities sake do I here both senses together, in a spirituall way of allusion: Why all that have not Christ with their spirits, are such as cannot rightly *savour spirituall things*; such *put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter*.

I would have all you that live in your sins, seriously think on this too, as a further degree of unhappinesse. You come oftentimes to Widowes home, and though she prepare

you all spirituall dainties, yet you can relish nothing but some by things, that lie about the dish rather for ornament then for food. And would you know the reason of this? it is because Christ is not with your spirits. If Christ were with you, you would feed on every dish at Widdomes table, on promises, yea, and on threatnings too: *To the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet*, saith *Solomon*. All that is good and wholesome goes down well, where Christ is with the spirit. You come frequently to Widdomes house, who keeps a table here and 'twere for a king, and yet you have lean shrivel'd souls, like men in a consumption: every one tells you that you look as if you were starved, speak and live as if you never heard a good sermon from years end to years end: they tell you that you are so lean and feeble, that you need the benefit of all the spirits, that every dish at Widdomes table can yield, to strengthen you, and recover you, and yet every dish almost goes against your stomachs; and that you do eat, is without favour or any other virtue; and so you languish with all dainties before you; and thus you will go on languishing, untill you quite consume and perish eternally, unless Christ be with your spirits.

You

You see (I suppose) plainly by this time, that as it is a prime and principall happines to have Christ with our spirits ; so it is a prime and principall evil and unhappinesse not to have Christ with our spirits. Wherefore having laid open both before you , let me entreat you all to look in upon your spirits, & see who keeps company with them, Christ or the devil; one of these two is withal our spirits. If Christ be not with our spirits the devil is and will be. If Christ be with your spirits, according to the sense and meaning of the Apostle in my text, you shall find it by these two things, *the bodie is dead because of sinne; and the spirit is life because of righteousness.* It is *Pauls* character of Christs speciall presence in the soul of man upon earth ; and therefore of strong authoritie. *And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sins, but the spirit is life because of righteousness,* Rom. 8. 10. The body is dead because of sin; that is, the body of corruption is destroyed, as in respect of the guilt of it, so in respect of the dominion of it. And *the spirit is life because of righteousness;* that is , the regenerate part is *vigorous*, in reference to all righteous ways.

And if therefore you would know whether Christ be with your spirits, see whether

your bodies be dead because of sinne : whether you labour to bring *every thought into subjection to Christ*; or whether you do not *allow* you selves liberty to some evil, out of love to some pleasure or profit; which is that principally, wherein the dominion of sinne consisteth; as *Paul* hints unto us, where he saith, *The evil which I do, I allow not*. That is, I do not approve of it in my heart, nor plead for it with my tongue; but strive against it with all my strength; and it would be more joy to me, to be rid of it, then if I had a Kingdome conferred to me. This is the language right of one that hath Christ with his spirit.

Secondly, see whether your *spirit be alive because of righteousness*, if you would know whether Christ be with your spirits or not. See whether holy wayes do heartily affect you; *I rejoiced when they said, Come let us go to the house of the Lord*, saith the *Psalmist*. He spake like a man, having Christ indeed with his spirit: his spirit leapt within him, like the babe in *Elizabeths* wombe, when they spake of drawing near to God, in the duties of his worship. A Christian that hath Christ with his spirit, sees a taking transcendent beautie in all *Wisdomes wayes*;

*they*

*they are all wayes of pleasure, and paths of peace*; which is spoken in reference to such as have Christ with their spirits: for others find no such thing in them. And his spirit opens in them like flowers in the Sunne, and smells fragrantly, he bends and cleaves to them, in love to that souls-sweetnesse which he finds in them. And if you find these things in you, I think I may safely tell you to your comfort, that Christ is with your spirits.

I may turn this Character into another form, as *Paul* doth, and tell you in his words, *that he which is joyed to the Lord is one spirit*, 1. Cor. 6. 17. They that have Christ with their spirits, are one spirit with Christ. This expression (I conceive) is something explained by these following words; *And the multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and one soul*, Acts 4. 32. or as the original hath it *ἡ καρδία αὐτῶν ἡνωμένη ἓν, heart and soul one*. They that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soul one with Christ. They do *idem velle, & idem nolle*, What Christ loves, they love; and what Christ hates they hate. Christ loves righteousness, and hates iniquitie: *Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquities, &c.* Psal. 45. 7. They  
that

that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soul one with Christ in this. They love righteousness, that is, all righteous wayes: and hate iniquity; that is, all that Gods word condemnes. It was Christs meat and drink to do his Fathers will; they that have Christ with their spirits, are one spirit with Christ in this: *It is joy to the just to do iudgement,* saith *Solomon*. Christ was tender about keeping the least commandment, as well as about keeping the greatest. *Whosoever shall break one of the least commandments, and teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.* Marth. 5. 19. They that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soul one with Christ in this; they are tender to keep all Gods Commandments: least as well as greatest. *So shall I not be confounded,* whilst *I have respect unto all thy commandments,* saith *David*. I do not conceive the place fore-cited so, as if Christ did account of one part of his Fathers will above another: I rather think that he there speaks *Phariseorum more*; in the Pharisees dialect, who would make the world believe, that they mightily laboured to keep some precepts, but others they thought, as many of us now do, that they need not to be so strict about

about. Now Christs tender Spirit for his Fathers honour, could not brook this halting in Religion; and they that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soul one with Christ in this, That that commandment w<sup>th</sup> the most say is one of the *least*, and may be dispensed w<sup>th</sup> hall, or at least need not be so strictly look'd unto; that as well as any other, (whilst a precious part of Christs will) a man that hath Christ with his spirit, will be tender to observe. *Dauids* spirit smote him for cutting off the lap of *Sauls* garment, as well as for cutting off the life of *Uriah*; which plainly shews, that men which have Christ with their spirits, are tender about the avoiding of small finnes, as well as great.

Now possibly some of you by what hath been said; may see, that as yet you have not Christ with your spirits: I shall addresse my self in the first place, particularly to speak to you; and then in the second place, I shall addresse my self particularly to speak to such of you, as have by what hath been said, discerned that Christ is indeed with your spirits. To you which by what hath been said, see that as yet Christ is not with your spirits; I have onely these two things

to say, labour to bewail your great want, as persons deeply sensible of it; and then labour to get this great want speedily supplied.

First, labour to bewail your great want, as persons deeply affected with it. It is the greatest want in the world, to want Christ to be with a mans spirit. Other wants may be afflicting wants, but this is a damning want. Other wants may make thee despired of men, but this want will make thee forever to be abhorred of God. Thou were better want riches, thou were better want hours; nay, thou were better want bread to put in thy head, then want Christ to be in thy heart. Thou were better want thy dear Husband, thy sweet Wife to lie in thy bosome, then want Christ to lie there. Nay, thy soul were better to be without thy bodie, then without Christ. If there be any want under heaven, that makes a hell to a man upon earth, it is this; to want Christ to be with his spirit. For what is it that makes hell hell, a place full of sin, and full of misery? but this, that Christ is not with those spirits: they are spirits everlastingly excluded from all communion with Christ. Now whereas great wants make you complaine heavily

heavily, and mourn bitterly, beg the Lord to make these things sink into your spirits, that you may be sensible of this great want of wants, that your spirits are without Christ, and so without God in this world; that so all sorrow for other wants, may meet and run in one channell. to bewail this great want. *Sauls* speech to his servant, I may here fitly allude to, *Come let us return* (said he) *lest my Father leave caring for the asses, and take thought for us.* If you that mourn for this want, and that want, did but feel the want of Christ with your spirits; you would with *Kiss* quickly leave mourning for trifles, and begin to mourn for things of weight. Come, O my soul! cease mourning for father and mother; cease mourning for husband and wife, for children and substance; and begin to mourn for this; that thou yet livest Christlesse, and art in the ready way to die, and perish remedlesse.

When you have got your hearts to bleed inwardly, under your great want ~~when~~ cry mightily to the Lord, and supply it. And to make your prayers prevalent, urge the promise of God, wherein he hath engaged himself to do good in Christ, to them that are *afarre off*. Thy soul thou findest  
farre

farre off from Christ: why the promise (saith the Apostle) of Christ and salvation by him, is to such: *For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are [as] far off.* This Peter spake by way of comfort, as now I do, to such as felt their spirits without Christ; without grace and hope of glorie. Christ you see is under a generall promise, and therefore no soul should despair of obtaining him. He is promised to the Jews, and not onely to them, but to us Gentiles, who *sometimes were as farre off*, not to this Gentile or that, but to all that are prickt in heart for the want of him: *For the Promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are as farre off.* Let every one therefore upon this ground, that feels his spirit prickt and wounded, for want of Christ, take words to himselfe, and go unto God, and say.

O God! my soul is a poore Christlesse soul. I find by wofull experience, that the Lord Jesus is not with my spirit, by reason of which I live wickedly to thy dishonour, and shall, I know not how soon, die miserably to mine own eternall undoing, if thou do not shew mercie upon me, according to thy promise. Thou hast said, that thou wilt

bestow

bestow Christ, grace, and salvation upon them that are afar off; make good thy gracious promise to me, whose spirit is far from Christ, grace, and all good; so shalt thou oblige me for ever unto thee; and I shall tell of thy goodnesse as long as I live.

Having thus spoken what I thought fit, to such as find by what was formerly delivered, that Christ is not with their spirits; I shall in the next place speak unto you, that by what was formerly delivered, find that Christ is with your spirits. Something by way of counsell, and something by way of consolation I have to deliver unto you. Three things by way of counsel, I would commend unto you: *thankfully acknowledge this great favour; carefully preserve it; and industriously labour to augment it.*

First, thankfully acknowledge this great favour. It is a pearl of great price that God hath cast into thy bolome, to give Christ to be with thy spirit: and for great favours every one will acknowledge it very fit and just, that they should be thankfull. It is a jewel that Christ scarce gives to one of ten thousand: and for rare gifts, every one will readily confesse it to be great ingratitude, not thankfully to acknowledge them. Doest

thou

thou not heare some swear, some curse, some lie, like their father the devil? Why, thou wouldst have been such an one, had not God given Christ to be with thy spirit. Doeſt thou not see some drunkards, some whoremasters, some murderers, some persecutors of the saints? Why, thou wouldst have been such an one, if God had not given Christ to be with thy spirit. Doeſt thou not see some make a god of their bellie, some make a god of their wealth, some proud, some mad, some putting farre from them the evil day, living as if they should never die? Why, thou wouldst have been such an one, had not God given Christ to be with thy spirit. Doeſt thou not see some *Nabals*, some *Jezabels*, some *Cains*, some *Demases*, some *Judasess*? Why, amongst the number of these wouldst thou have been, had not God given Christ to be with thy spirit. Wherefore magnifie the Lord with all thy might, and let all that is within thee praise his holy Name. Think but how it was with thee, when thy spirit was without Christ; *How foolish thou wast serving divers lusts*: how the god of this world which rules mightily in the children of disobedience, did rule mightily in thee. How weak

thy

thy spirit was, and easily overcome and carried captive of every lust. How drunken thy spirit was, and reel'd from one opinion to another; one day thou thoughtst thus and thus; and another day thou thoughtst quite contrarie. I say, do but think of these things, and how the Lord might justly have left thee still to have gone on thus, untill thou hadst perished, as he hath done many thousands, & then be unthankful for the communion of Christ with thy spirit, if thou canst. It was this consideration that set *Paul* a wondering at the goodnesse of the Lord: *I was a blasphemour, a persecutor, &c. yet I obtained mercie.* He circumflexes this term [*I*] yet [*I*] obtained mercie, &c. It was wonderfull in his eye that God should give Christ to dwell with such a bloody blaspheming spirit as he had. In this way let us go to work to raise our dull spirits, to magnifie the free goodnesse of the Lord: for it is a work of all works that God loves. I was a man of a very proud, passionate, malicious, unclean spirit; and yet I obtained mercie. God hath given Christ to be with this depraved spirit, and in a little time he hath done very much, and made a manifest change in my spirit; of very proud, he hath made

made it in some measure humble; of very passionate, in some measure patient; of very malicious, in some measure loving; of very unclean, in some measure continent. O the riches of his love! *how unsearchable is his mercie, and his love past finding out?*

Secondly, as I would have you thankfully acknowledge this great favour, so I would have you carefully labour to preserve it. You find that you have Christ with your spirits, take heed you do not lose him. Thou wert better lose thy life, then lose the special presence of Christ with thy spirit. 'Tis a prime and principall blessing, as thou hast heard; a blessing of more worth then this world; nay, of more worth then thy soul, which Christ values above the world. Now choice things we are usually very carefull of, and keep them choicely. Christ totally (I know) can no man lose, which hath him after a speciall manner present with his spirit: but according to some prime and principall operations, he may: according to others, very farre, though not totally. A man may lose the presence of Christ with his spirit totally, as a comforter: *The comforter which should relieve my soul, is farre from me, saith Jeremiah, Lam. i. 16.* in the person

of

of the afflicted Church. 'Tis probable enough, that *Dauids* spirit was thus stript of Christ by his dolorous complaints which frequently we reade of: *Is his mercye cleane gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?* *Psal.* 77. 7, 8, 9. Some carriages in Christians towards Christ, make Christ totally alter his carriage towards them; though for his promise sake, he will never totally remove himself from them.

As when Christians do not keep their watch strictly against sin, in all the occasions of it; then Christ, in stead of being a Comforter, becomes a convincer; and instead of speaking sweet things, he speaks very bitter unto the soul. This was the case of *David* and *Peter*. Or when Christians carelesse, and sluggish, to maintain and encrease their sweet communion with Christ, unyeilding to the sweet motions of the spirit of Christ, and turning oft times the deaf eare against the still voyce behind them, which saith, *this is the way walk in it*; There Christ draws a curtain between the spirit of man and himself, and leaves the spirit of

man in the dark, and full of fears. This is notably illustrated by that language of the Spouse, *It is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh, saying; Open to me, my Sister, my Love, my Dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* The Church was convinced of this, that it was her Beloved, seeking nearer communion with her, and yet observe how she replies. *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them? I opened to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone; my soul failed when he spake; I sought him, but I could not find him: I called him, but he gave me no answer,* Cant. 5. You that find the presence of Christ with your spirits, as a Comforter, make Christian use of what I have said, that you may still enjoy so great a mercy. And if you lose the Lord Jesus Christ, as a Comforter to your spirits, miserable comforters will all other things prove unto you. You will mourn, and none will be able to comfort you, if Christ as a Comforter forsake your spirits.

Secondly, as a leader, a man may very far lose the communion of Christ with his spirit. As if a Christian take libertie to sinne  
against

against that light, which Christ hath set up in his spirit; this will make Christ first or last (if not timely lookt unto) leave a man to his own understanding, to steer his course; and then will such a man declare himself quickly to be a fool and a beast, in many points, as *David* saith. Have you not seen Christians of great light erre in judgment, and erre in practise? Whence comes this weaknesse, but from hence, that Christ as a leader stands aloof from their spirits? which is a plain demonstration, that a man may lose the presence of Christ with his spirit, as a leader. *David* (I believe) found the truth of this, as well as of the former, by wofull experience. A man may collect so much clearly, from his own words: *Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me*, Psal. 51. 11. The spirit of God is therefore called by *David* a holy spirit, because holy in himself (the spirit of the holy God, as he said to *Daniel*) but principally here, as I conceive, *Ab officio*, because the worker of holinesse in us. *David* doubtlesse by his fall, found an exceeding weaknesse in his spirit unto all good, over what formerly he did, and strong propensitie again to erre; as every act of sinne leaves

seed and spawne upon the spirit, to bring forth more, to cover the first, or to commit the like again. But more then all this; he found Christ to stand aloof from his spirit; not exercising that speciall dominion in his spirit, as before, for the subduing of lust, and suggesting of holy motions and desires; but leaving him as it were to himself, as one with whom he would have no more to do. And therefore doth *David* so dolefully complain, *Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy [holy] Spirit from me*: you therefore which find Christ with your spirits, as a tender leader, take heed of sinning against any part of that light, which he sets up in your understandings, or against any motions of his spirit, which he suggests unto you; lest he leave you to your own light, and to your own strength: and then will you run from lesse sins to greater, from one sinne to another, like *David* and *Peter*, to the scandalizing of the Gospel, and the desperate wounding of your own souls.

The third and last thing that I would commend unto you, by way of counsell, is this: labour to augment this great favour. You find Christ with your spirits, labour industriously, to have Christ more and more

with

with your spirits, 'Tis a prime and princippall blessing, as you have heard, to have Christ with your spirits; therefore labour to get as much of this favour and happinesse as possibly you can. Thou hast Christ with thy spirit, as a teacher; why thou maist have him yet more intimate with thee, and open unto thee, in imparting divine mysteries, if thou *follow onto know*, as the Prophet speaks, if thou humbly forget, and look over all thou hast, and presse hard after more: the things thou knewest not, Christ will teach thy spirit, morning by morning, as by the learned. Christ hath taught thy spirit many truths, why, he will *lead thy spirit into all truth*, if thou urge his promise and believe. He will *fill thee with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom & spiritual understanding*. if thou pray for it as *Paul* did for the *Colossians*.

Thou findest Christ with thy spirit as a Comforter; why thou maist have yet much more consolation from him. if thou study to be more pliable to him. Thou hast Christ distilling drops of consolation into thy spirit, now and then; why thou maist have Christ pouring in flacons of love into thy soul, filling thee with joy unspeakable and full of glory, if thou bring thy spirit to be more low-

ly and meek; for such find most rest to their souls: if thou carefully keep coming to Christ still in every pressure of spirit; for such find most ease: that is renewing faith still, as thou renewest thy finnes.

Thou findest Christ with thy spirit, as a quickner and strengthner to dutie; why thou maist find him yet more mightie with thy spirit this way, if thou poure out thy spirit often with *David* for quickning grace; and if thou more deny thine own strength, and cast thy self more upon his. Could we but attain *Pauls* height in self-deniall, to be nothing in our selves (though I am nothing saith he) we should find Christ gloriously present still with our spirits, & be more constant in zeal and strength to every good work, then we are. I conclude this thus, Be so tractable to Christ, that thou maist with *Mary*, win upon Christ still; and think that thou canst never be near enough to him, nor intimate enough with him; and this is the ready way, to have a heaven upon earth: for the more we get Christ to be with our spirits, the more truly may we be said to be in heaven.

The last thing that I have to say to you, that find Christ with your spirits, is matter of

of consolation. Here is comfort for you against famine. When thy body wants food, Christ that is with thy spirit, will give that meat to eat, which the world knows not of; so that when others repine, and *curse God and their King* in their extremities, as the Prophet speaks; thou shalt be patient in prayer to him, who can command Ravens to bring thee bread and flesh to feed on; and will, rather then thou shalt starve, if thy life may be more to his glory, then thy death.

Here's comfort for you against the sword. In the midst of all troubles and fears, Christ that is with thy spirit will bear thee up admirably. What is the face of an enemy to terrify; if Christ be with thy spirit? What is the spoiling of thy goods? nay, what is the spoiling of thy body? if Christ be with thy soul. A Mountain of misery, is but as a Mole-hill, if Christ support the spirit. To think of the sword is a naked reference to flesh and blood, and so nothing is more terrible: but let us that fear the Lord think of it, in reference to Christ that is with our spirits, and then we shall not be troubled, though we hear of warres and rumours of warres, no more then at the rumours of any other calamity.

Here is comfort for you against the plague, which is here and there scattered in the kingdome. What is any disease to the bodie, if Christ be with thy soul? As the outward man decayeth, the inward man shall be renewed dayly, because Christ is with thy spirit. When thy body is full of pain, thy soul shall be full of comfort, because Christ is with thy spirit. When thy body is sealed with spots of death, thy soul shall be sealed with the holy Ghost unto eternall life, because Christ is with thy spirit. The plague of the body is nothing, if this plague of plagues be not upon the spirit, to wit, desitture of Christ.

Here is comfort for you against persecution. When men frown upon thee without, Christ will smile upon thy spirit within: when men lade the outward man with reproaches, Christ will fill thy inward man with comforts: when men shut up thy body from the communion of Saints, Christ will give thy spirit a large freedome of communion with himself. When men strike thy body, Christ will stroke thy soul: when men kill thy body, Christ will save thy soul. In a word, as the afflictions of Christ abound in thy body, so the consolations of Christ

shall abound in thy soul, because Christ is with thy spirit. Name any misery that is incident to man, and her's comfort to be sucked out of this point, to oppose unto it. Vnally in life, in death, and eternally after death, Christ that is with thy spirit will be gain unto thee. Thy life he will make comfortable; thy death hopefull; thy being after death eternally joyfull. Wherefore I will conclude my sermon for the good of you, as Saint *Paul* doth his Epistle for the good of *Timothy*, *The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirits.*

TRINUNI DEO GLORIA.

FINIS.





